

Funeral prayer offered  
F.P. Report

KOHAT: The funeral prayer of policeman, martyred in the terrorist attack was offered here at Police Line, Kohat on Thursday. The funeral prayer was attended by KP IGP Akhtar Hayat Khan, GOC Nine Division Kohat Major General Zulfiqar Bhatti, Regional Police Officer Sher Akbar, Commissioner Kohat Abid Khan, Senior Police Officials, and family members of martyred personnel and others.

Quake jolts parts of KP  
F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: An earthquake of medium intensity jolted various parts of the country including KP on Thursday. The magnitude of the earthquake was 6 on Richter scale. The earthquake was felt in various areas of the province including Peshawar, Mardan, Chitral, Nowshera, Hangu, DI Khan and Upper Dir. The epicenter of the earthquake was in 213 deep in Hindu Kush Range in Afghanistan.



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# State is going to win war against terrorism: PM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday said the entire nation was highly indebted to the KP police which was fighting against the terrorists with bravery and valour.

"You are God's chosen group who are fighting for the State's security, the martyrs deserve paradise while the opponent group is destined to be the hell forever," he said while addressing the officials of KP Police at 'Police Darbar'. He said the security forces always fought fearlessly with the terrorists, keeping in mind Allah's promise that those who were on the right path, would never get afraid of the enemy.

"The war you are fighting is morally correct : you should do your duty with utmost belief, courage and confidence," he remarked. Paying tributes to Shaheed Siffat and Shaheed Malik Saad, the prime minister said that they were the assets of the KP Police. Recalling the barbarism by the terrorists in APS incident in Peshawar some years back, the prime minister said the cruelty of the terrorists who targeted innocent children would never be forgotten.

He said death was the ultimate reality which might occur to anyone, any time, so there was no need to be afraid. "Every attack from the terrorists will be responded with more power and in a ferocious manner." Strongly condemning the miscreants, the prime minister asserted that he would continue to raise his voice against them till the last moment of his life. "They are cowardice and shameless, they have no courage to fight from the front and always fight from behind the doors," he added.

He pointed out the terrorists were hampering the process of development and prosperity of country. He said they were not worthy to be sympathized in any manner. "They are cowards, cruel, senseless and shameless." Prime Minister Kakar said no one knew the names of terrorists who had been killed but the martyrs' names would be remembered for

long time.

He said terrorists had initiated a war with the State on their own choice but the end result would not be according to their wishes. "The state is going to win this war, it will take some time but we are destined to win it because we are on the right path. Allah Almighty also helps those who are on the right path," he asserted.

PM Kakar said : "We will have to fight with wisdom and proper strategy". He vowed to take the fight against terrorism in the country to the logical end. The prime minister also announced to look into the issue and demands of KP Police.

Earlier, in his welcome remarks, Inspector General Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Gandapur said the provinces of KP and Balochistan had been under the war against terrorism for decades. He said the KP police was bravely fighting with the terrorists in the province and had rendered numerous sacrifices in the war against the terrorism.

He said the KP police was committed to uprooting the menace of terrorism and eliminating other crimes. He said the security personnel were fighting bravely against the terrorists by putting their lives at risks. He also sought financial help from the federal and provincial governments to equip the police with state-of-the-art weapons and facilities.

**PM for harnessing true IT potential through HR training, enabling environment:** Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said that with a focus on training of human resources as per contemporary requirements, enabling environment and imbining the spirit of entrepreneurship in the youth, the true potential of Pakistan's IT sector could be harnessed. "This will turn around and uplift our economy in the short to medium term, Inshallah... I assure you of the government's full support to help you explore the untapped potential in Pakistan's IT sector," he said addressing a Tech Destination Pakistan event which featured the launch of E-Rozgar Centers in the country.

## SC to hear ECP's appeal pertaining to PTI's symbol

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan will hear the appeal of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday against restoration of 'cricket bat' as the election symbol of PTI.

A three-member bench of the top court, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali will hear the case against the verdict of Peshawar High Court (PHC).

The ECP, in its petition, stated that the decision of the high court was against the Constitution and law. It may be mentioned that the PHC had restored the election symbol 'bat' on the petition of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) a day back. The ECP had challenged the verdict before the apex court today.

**ECP removes objections from petition against PHC verdict:** The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday removed

objections from its petition seeking to overrule the Peshawar High Court's verdict in favour of PTI intra-party polls and revival of its iconic electoral symbol.

The SC registrar office had earlier in the day returned the top electoral body's appeal after raising objections. The appeal was filed against the PHC verdict nullifying ECP's decision to declare PTI's intra-party polls "unconstitutional" and strip the former ruling party of its their symbol 'bat' — a sign that depicts the party's founder, Imran Khan's former life of cricket.

However, the electoral body filed an amended plea after expunging the documents to which the objections were raised by the top court's registrar. Additionally, the commission prepared a miscellaneous petition to be submitted to the apex court for the immediate hearing of the amended plea, media reported citing sources. The miscellaneous plea is likely to be filed by the ECP after the

allotment of case number by the top court.

Minutes before the plea was filed in the apex court, the Imran-led party filed a contempt of court petition against the ECP over its failure to comply with the court order to revive its 'bat' electoral symbol ahead of the February 8 general elections. The party which rose to power after the 2018 general polls contended that the election commission committed "contempt of court" by failing to upload the certificate regarding PTI's intra-party elections on its website despite getting PHC directives.

CEC Sikander Sultan Raja, ECP members and secretary were made respondents in the case. A day earlier, a two-member bench of the PHC comprising Justice Ejaz Anwar and Justice Syed Arshad Ali announced a short order on a petition jointly filed by PTI leader Gohar Ali Khan and six other party leaders, pleading with the court to declare the ECP order "null and void".

## SC's Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan also quits

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In a rare development, the Supreme Court's second senior-most judge after the incumbent chief justice, Ijaz Ul Ahsan, resigned on Thursday. Ahsan, who would become the next chief justice of Pakistan after incumbent CJP Qazi Faez Isa, has sent his resignation to President Arif Alvi, raising questions over his untimely departure.

The major event comes within a day of Justice (retd) Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi's resignation, which has also been accepted by the president today. Ahsan would have become the chief justice — the highest judicial office in the country that comes with supreme power — after CJP Isa's term concluded in October this year as Justice Tariq Masood, the senior puisne judge, would hang his robes before that.

In his resignation to the president, Ahsan said he no longer wished to continue as the top court's judge, therefore, he was resigning under Article 206(1) of the Constitution with immediate effect. Both the judges were considered 'close' to former CJP Umar Ata Bandial, with analysts saying that the jurists were involved in issuing controversial orders — along with another judge, Justice Munib Akhtar. While Bandial was in office, the fault lines between the top court's judges were visible. This trend diminished when CJP Isa

came to the helm, but the damage had already been done.

In April last year, a lawyer filed a reference before the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) against then-CJP Bandial and three other judges — Justice Ahsan, Justice Akhtar, and Justice Naqvi. The complainant based his reference on an alleged violation of the Code of Conduct for judges of the superior judiciary issued by the SJC on September 2, 2009.

Born in 1960, Ahsan began his legal career in the 1980s. He was confirmed as a judge of the Lahore High Court on May 11, 2009, and became the LHC's CJ on November 6, 2015. He was elevated to the Supreme Court on June 28, 2016, less than a year after serving as the LHC's top judge. It is important to note that he was part of the infamous Panama Papers bench that disqualified Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif.

He was also appointed to oversee proceedings of the references that the NAB has been asked to file — by the top court — against Nawaz, his family members, and former finance minister Ishaq Dar. Also, in 2018, Ahsan was part of the five-member bench that had ruled that disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) was "permanent". Then, he was also part of the bench that ruled that if a person is disqualified, then they cannot even head a political party.

## PTI leader shot dead in Swabi

F.P. Report

SWABI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) local leader Shah Khalid was shot dead by unknown assailants in broad daylight in Swabi district on Thursday.

According to the details, two armed motorcyclists opened fire on the vehicle of PTI leader, killing him on the spot. His body was taken to the hospital for further medical examination. The attackers managed to escape from the scene. Soon after the incident, Police reached the crime scene and cordoned off the area for investigation. An investigation into the case has been launched, said police.

## PM to attend WEF on 15th

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar will visit Davos, Switzerland, on January 15-19, to participate in the 54th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF), the Foreign Office said Thursday.

The WEF is an annual gathering of government and corporate leaders for discussions on contemporary trends and challenges, developments shaping the world, and charting collective policy responses. The theme of this year's meeting is "Rebuilding Trust."

Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch at a weekly press briefing said the prime minister would attend three key thematic events including preventing an era of global conflict, restoring faith in the global system, and preventing economic fracture. She said the prime minister would also deliver a keynote address on the theme "Trade Tech's Trillion Dollar Promise" and hold meetings with government and business leaders on the sidelines.

The FO spokesperson said Pakistan rejected the US State Department's classification of Pakistan as a "Country of Particular Concern" (CPC). "There are serious questions about the credibility and transparency of the process of making such classifications," she said.

Baloch said, "We also believe that such unilateral, arbitrary, and subjective designations and reports are counterproductive and undermine the objective of advancing religious freedoms." The spokesperson said Pakistan supported the application filed by South Africa before the International Court of Justice concerning Israel's violations of its obligations under the 1951 Genocide Convention about the Palestinian people in Gaza.

"We consider this legal action timely and an important step towards holding Israel to account for its well-documented atrocities unleashed against Palestinian people since 7 October 2023," she said.

## Tribal women protest against power outage

F.P. Report

JAMRUD: Local women blocked the Pak-Afghan in protest against the prolonged power off here in front of grid, Tedi Bazaar, Jamrud, district Khyber on Thursday.

The locals and police official said that scores of women along with their children from surrounding villages led by councilor Wagma Afridi appeared on the highway, put stones on it and initiated sit-in on the road to suspend it for all kinds of traffic.

Speaking on the occasion Wagma Afridi said that excessive power off had disturbed their routine activities while the concerned officials turned blind eyes towards their miseries that was injustice to them. She maintained that unavailability of power supply had made their lives miserable and were facing domestic difficulties besides their children had got ill due to cold weather.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addressing the KP Police Darbar ceremony.

## IMF Executive Board approves \$700m loan tranche for Pakistan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Executive Board Thursday approved a \$700 million loan tranche for Pakistan, boosting the cash-strapped nation's forex reserves.

The loan was released after the board completed its first review of Pakistan's economic reform programme supported by a standby arrangement (SBA), the Ministry of Finance said in a post on X. Under the \$3 billion arrangement, Pakistan received \$1.2 billion from the IMF as the first tranche — with the other two being subject to reviews. The first has been completed, while the other one will be in December.

The finance ministry added that

the completion of the review allows for an immediate disbursement of around \$700 million, bringing the total disbursements under the SBA to \$1.9 billion. Dr Khaqan Hasan Najeeb, a financial expert, told media that it was important for Pakistan to clear the first review as its external financing needs of \$25 billion necessitate it stay with the IMF.

"\$700 million from the IMF and flows of the multilaterals will prop up not only the state banks reserves but also give confidence to the markets," Najeeb added. Pakistan was nearing a default when the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) was about to end its term last year. However, entering the SBA with the IMF helped the South Asian nation stave off the sovereign default.

The forex reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), as of January 5, stand at \$8.1 billion, while the country's total reserves have reached \$13.2 billion after a debt of \$66 million was repaid. With the addition of the latest tranche, Pakistan's forex reserves will reach a six-month-high — as on July 14, the SBP reserves were around \$8.73 billion.

With the second review remaining, Najeeb said going forward, it's extremely important that Pakistan completes all the targets, quantitative performance criteria, and indicative targets, as well as structural benchmarks due on December 31. "The second review, which starts sometime in February, must also be completed for the final tranche," he added.

## LEGAL NOTICE



ADVOCATES AND COUNSELLORS.



telenor microfinance bank

easypaisa

We have been instructed by M/s Telenor Microfinance Bank Limited (hereinafter to be referred to as "Telenor Bank/ easypaisa"), to serve the instant legal notice upon all and any persons involved in the initiation and dissemination of the false and fake news surrounding our Client i.e. Telenor Bank/easypaisa.

At the outset, it is stated that Telenor Bank/easypaisa is an independent company and financial institution licensed and regulated by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), which is committed to provide services of the highest standard to its Customers.

However, certain culpable individuals are involved in making electronic media news/posts for dissemination of fake and false news/claims against Telenor Bank/easypaisa to damage its business integrity and in pursuance of making these electronic media news/posts, have also engaged in electronic forgery/fraud by illegally counterfeiting the trademarks/logos of Telenor Bank/easypaisa.

Regarding the foregoing, it is stated that such acts are actionable under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016, Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 and Defamation Ordinance, 2002. Therefore, Telenor Bank/easypaisa through this notice asserts that it shall exercise this right to pursue action in both civil and criminal capacity of the law, before all relevant investigation agencies including Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to identify and/or try the persons involved in this appalling attack on not only Telenor Bank/easypaisa but its customers by misleading them.

Thus, the persons involved are asked to immediately cease the unlawful and illegal acts, however, in case of failure to adhere to this legal notice, Telenor Bank/easypaisa has given clear instructions to initiate strict legal action against said persons, at their own risk, which is inclusive of proceedings before a court of law in both its civil and criminal jurisdictions.

ABS & Co.





## Minister stresses post-election focus on education for national progress

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi emphasised the crucial role of education in propelling Pakistan towards progress.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the Lahore Leads University's 7th convocation held at Aiwan-e-Iqbal here on Thursday.

Encouraging political parties to prioritise the education sector, he underscored the necessity of quality education for national advancement. Acknowledging the challenges faced by the government institutions, the minister praised the private sector's contribution while stressing the elected governments' responsibility in providing accessible and high-quality education. Sindhi commended Lahore Leads University for its 11-year commitment to delivering quality education and expressed optimism that the new graduates would contribute to the nation's success. The minister concluded by congratulating teachers, parents, and students, urging the graduates to illuminate the country's name through their hard-earned education. Later, he gave away degrees, awards and medals to the new graduates.

## 2 new dengue cases reported in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Two new dengue virus cases were reported in Punjab on Thursday. The latest Health Department data revealed that so far 13 confirmed dengue cases had been recorded across Punjab during the year 2024, as nine cases were reported in Lahore, two in Faisalabad, one each in Gujrat and Rawalpindi. Currently, hospitals in Punjab are treating a total of seven dengue patients. In Lahore's hospitals, one dengue patient is under treatment currently.

Punjab Health Secretary Ali Jaan Khan issued a compelling plea to citizens, urging them to maintain clean and dry surroundings as a preventive measure against dengue virus.

For those in need of dengue treatment, information, or wishing to register complaints, a free helpline is available through the Health Department at 1033. Vigilance and proactive measures are crucial to contain the alarming spread of dengue in Punjab.

## AIOU, NCHD for improving basic education

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) on Thursday for a collaboration between the two institutions to improve basic education, enhance literacy and provide skilled education.

The joint initiatives will include enrolling out-of-school children, providing internship opportunities to students, conducting project-based joint research activities, and organizing seminars, workshops, and conferences.

Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood presided over the ceremony.

# CM distributes 8 snorkels to KMC, HMC, Mirpurkhas, Larkana, SBA MCs

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (ret'd) Maqbool Baqar handed over eight snorkels, purchased for Rs1.35 billion, to the municipal corporations of Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur, Nawabshah, Mirpurkhas, and Larkana.

The snorkel distribution ceremony was hosted by Minister Local Govt Mubin Jumani at the water board office at Shahr-e-Faisal on Thursday.

The ceremony was attended by Minister Information Ahmad Shah, Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, Secretary Local Govt Manzoor Shaikh, Mayor Hyderabad Kashif Shoro, CEO Water Board Salahuddin, CEO Water Board Asadullah Khan and other officers and mayors.

The chief minister handed over three snorkels to KMC and each one to Hyderabad, Nawabshah, Mirpurkhas, Sukkur and Larkana.

During a ceremony, the Chief Minister addressed the audience and highlighted a grave issue related to the high-rise buildings in Karachi. He pointed out that many of these buildings lack proper firefighting systems, equipment, and fire exits.

In the event of a fire, the residents living on higher floors are at great risk of getting trapped, which can lead to the loss of both life and property.

Justice Baqar emphasized the importance of having a proper firefighting mechanism in place. To achieve this, the Sindh government has already ordered a fire safety audit of buildings. The aim is to identify any defects in the buildings and ensure that builders rectify them to ensure the safety of residents and occupants.

The Chief Minister stated that it is the shared responsibility of the government and civic agencies to ensure that there are adequate firefighting machines to handle fire incidents. As a result, the government has been investing in buying fire trucks

and snorkels for aerial firefighting.

The CM stated that the snorkels imported from Indonesia are state-of-the-art firefighting machines. Despite not being the required number of fire engines that cities like Karachi and others need, the snorkels are a step towards building more efficient firefighting departments that are well-equipped to handle fire incidents, ensuring the safety of residents.

Minister of Local Government, Mubin Jumani, has directed all local bodies to develop their firefighting systems for the protection of their people. The firefighting system will ultimately become part of Rescue 1122.

Secretary of Local Government, Manzoor Shaikh, stated that the Sindh government originally ordered 15 snorkels but only eight could be procured due to the dollar-rupee parity. The snorkels have arrived at KPT but are currently stuck there due to customs duties. However, the chief minister approved Rs. 350 million to get the snorkels released and they are now being handed over to the mayors. We are thankful to the chief minister for his support. After launching the Snorkels, the chief minister visited the water board's control room. From there, the movement of the water board's seven hydrants working in the city is being monitored. During the visit, the chief minister ordered the water board to regulate the prices of water tankers, as there were reports of them charging more than the fixed prices by the water board.

Justice Baqar expressed that the purpose of establishing or running the hydrants was to provide water to the water-deficient areas, but the private tanker mafia has turned it into a money-making source. He instructed the concerned officers to take immediate measures to stop this practice.

## BOP offers interest free green loans 10,000 eBikes for students and 10,000 eRickshaws in Punjab

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Government of Punjab, Transport Department, held a launch ceremony on January 09, 2024 to introduce exciting initiatives aimed at revolutionizing Transportation Sector. The event, held at Faletti's Hotel Lahore, showcased the GoPb's commitment to promote sustainable and eco-friendly modes of transportation.

This initiative featured the launch of an interest-free scheme in partnership with The Bank of Punjab (BOP), aimed to providing 10,000 e-Bikes to university students across Punjab. Besides, GoPb also initiated the registration of retrofitted three-wheelers and issued inaugural license for eRickshaws. These are significant milestones in the transition towards sustainable transportation in Punjab.

This event was graced by Mr. Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Chief Minister of Punjab, who in no unequivocal

terms expressed about the dedication of his Government in promoting e-Mobility for environmental benefits. Mr. Zafar Masud, President/CEO of BOP, and senior officials from the Bank, high-level government representatives, and delegates from various electronic vehicle manufacturers were also present at the occasion.

Mr Naqvi stated that Lahore is one of the most polluted cities in the world and time has come where we all need to play our due part. He felt proud that BOP had taken the lead role in this initiative, and was delighted to launch 1st interest free e-Bikes Scheme for students as well as interest free financing of 10,000 eRickshaws in Punjab.

He announced that from now on, GoPb shall only purchase e-Bikes. The Honorable Chief Minister also added that 2,000 e-Bikes for Government Servants, 2,000 e-Bikes for Working Women and 2,000 e-Scooters for disabled per-

sons shall also be provided through an interest free program soon.

Mr. Zafar Masud while speaking at the occasion, emphasized upon the core advantages this program shall have on promoting Economic Activity. Environmental Sustainability, Youth Empowerment, Green Financing, Financial Inclusion and Wider Demographic accessibility for the people of Punjab. He expressed his gratitude to the CM Punjab and underscored the significance of this partnership, contributing towards preservation of the environment. Mr. Masud also said that integrating environmental considerations into banking system would assist BOP in directing international financing from multilaterals. He mentioned about an opportunity where an agreement with a foreign agency is being finalized to the tune of 50 M to help support green-financing projects through BOP.



# Islamabad Airport inaugurated one of its CIP Lounges operated by hospitality leader Serena Hotels

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Islamabad International Airport recently inaugurated one of

its CIP Lounges operated by hospitality leader Serena Hotels.

This marks a significant development in the airport's pursuit of

enhancing the passenger experience.

The collaboration between Islamabad International Airport and Serena Hotel demonstrates a strategic partnership between the aviation and hospitality sectors.

The lounge design provides passengers a sophisticated and comfortable environment, ensuring a seamless experience while at the airport. Through this initiative, the airport aims to bring travelers the relaxing and inviting atmosphere of Serena Hotel, with an emphasis on quality service and superior amenities as it strives to set new standards for the passenger experience.

Partnering with a reputed hospitality brand is part of airport's efforts to offer its esteemed travelers more options and satisfaction.



LAHORE: A view of cleaning work of canal going on during the annual silt cleaning (bhal safai) campaign.

## CII chairman for imposing strict punishments for child abusers, abductors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) Chairman Dr Qibla Ayaz on Thursday stressed the need for legislation imposing strict punishments for child abusers and abductors to send a strong message to the criminals and curb such crimes.

He was speaking at a seminar on "Addressing the plight of missing children and the corresponding legal framework in Pakistan", organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with the Roshni Research and Development Welfare Organization - commonly known as Roshni Helpline 1138. The CII chairman said that political instability and social discord created a space for evil forces in the society to easily commit various crimes, including child abductions and serial abuse. "The high prevalence of illiteracy allows fake religious figures (peers) to prey on aggrieved parents and further adds to their misery," he added. SDPI Executive Director Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri said that the issue of missing children and overall abuse of child rights could not be resolved by any single institution and only collective wisdom and collaboration could be the effective remedy.

## Participants show unity at NCSW consultation to 'End child marriage'

LAHORE (APP): All stakeholders should join hands to work together against the child marriage and legislation in Punjab during a consultation to 'End child marriage', arranged by the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), with its development partners i.e. UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women, held at a local hotel on Thursday.

Provincial representatives of the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women, Social Welfare Department, the Punjab Child Protection Welfare Bureau, Punjab Human Rights and Minorities Affairs Department, Health Department and Punjab Local Government and Community Development Department, other government departments, civil society organizations, NGOs, experts on mental and physical health, students and the media participated to draw an effective way forward to end child marriage in the country.

### SUIT NOTICE

In the court of Miss Ambareen Navid Judge Banking Court-1 Peshawar Federal Judicial Complex, Phase-7 Hayatabad Peshawar. Case No: 06/01 of 2024 Date of hearing 14-02-2024 Suit for the recovery of Rs. 235,702.20 HBL (RHG) Bank road Mardan Vs: Danish Kamal. Notice Versus:- Danish Kamal son of Muhammad Irfan Khan, R/o:- Mohallah Behlol khel Hisar Tang, Tehsil and Dist: Nowshera. Where as the plaintiff bank has instituted a suit for the recovery of Rs. 235,702.20 Against you under section 10(2) of the Financial Institution (Recovery of Finance) Ordinance 2001, you are hereby summoned to obtain leave of the court to appear and defend the suit within 30 days after receipt / publication of the notice in the newspapers. Failing which an ex-parte decree shall be passed in favour of the plaintiff Bank with costs. Issued today on 03-01-2024 under my signature and seal of the Court.

Registrar, Banking Court,1 Peshawar

### SUIT NOTICE

In the court of Miss Ambareen Navid Judge Banking Court-1 Peshawar Federal Judicial Complex, Phase-7 Hayatabad Peshawar. Case No: 04/01 of 2024 Date of hearing 13-02-2024 Suit for the recovery of Rs. 268,807.90 HBL Mardan cantt: Branch Mardan Vs: Malik Yousaf. Notice Versus:- Malik Yousaf son of Malik Younas R/o:- New Mohallah, Qursli cafe, House No.463, Jehanzeb Tent, Tehsil and Dist: Nowshera. Where as the plaintiff bank has instituted a suit for the recovery of Rs. 268,807.90 Against you under section 10(2) of the Financial Institution (Recovery of Finance) Ordinance 2001, you are hereby summoned to obtain leave of the court to appear and defend the suit within 30 days after receipt / publication of the notice in the newspapers. Failing which an ex-parte decree shall be passed in favour of the plaintiff Bank with costs. Issued today on 03-01-2024 under my signature and seal of the Court.

Registrar, Banking Court,1 Peshawar

## استعمال سمجھداری سے ذمہ داری سے!

# گیزر کی بروقت مرمت نہ کروانا بل میں کئی گنا اضافے کا سبب بنتا ہے

گیس کے اضافی بل سے بچنے کیلئے یقینی بنائیں

گیزر کی چھان بین رنگ کوڈ نہ ہوں

گیزر کے ختم ہو جانے میں کوئی خرابی نہ ہو

گیزر کے ساتھ ناقص آلات کی تعمیر نہ ہو

## PAKISTAN ACADEMY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT, PESHAWAR TENDER NOTICE

Pakistan Academy for Rural Development Peshawar invites sealed bids from well reputed financially sound firms/company working in electricity generating/production to be entered with Pakistan Academy for Rural Development in Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) process per following Summary.

Organization Name	Pakistan Academy for Rural Development Peshawar
PPA Project Size	499KW UP TO 1 MW (ON Grid System)
Solar Facility to be installed Tariff	Min 15% Discounted Tariff on the prevailing Avg On-Peak/Off Peak Tariff (Exclusive of al taxes) GST/IT/WT.
Years Term	20 Years
Capital Investment BY PARD	0 PKR
Annual Production Expected	Minimum 665,000 Kwh Average
Inverter	Minimum:- On Grid Solar, Huawei OR Equivalent Capable of Accepting PV, Local graphic Software display, Dual MPPT, Max. efficiency 98%, effectively reducing string mismatch, Transformer less Topology, Protection degree of IP65, WIFI Dongle.
Solar Module	Minimum:- P/N Type Solar 550/580W, Solar Module, Mono Perc Crystalline efficiency up to 21% or above, low light high performance panel.
Earthing Pit & Installation Accessories	Earthing Rod3 ft. Boring DC Separately 6mm Earthing cable from Rod to Inverter Distribution box 4mm earth cable from Panel to Inverter SPD, then to Earthing Pit.
Installation & Commissioning Charges	Fixing/Installation of complete system with all necessary safety measures as per DISCO requirements.

- The Firm/company/contractor should registered with sales Tax and income Tax department, having sufficient managerial, technical, financial capabilities of power generation and it's supply.
- Rs.25 Million as bid security in the shape of CDR / PO pledged in favour of Director General Pakistan Academy for Rural Development Peshawar must be submitted along with the bid. Bid without security offer shall not be accepted.
- Bidding will be conducted under the provision of Government of Pakistan procurement Rules 2014 (Rule 38 (2) (a) single stage two envelopes bidding procedures). Bids should be dropped in the Tender Box kept in the Office, on or before 31st January 2024.
- No bid shall be accepted after due date and time.
- Technical proposals shall be opened on the same day at 11.00 AM in the presence of the bidders or other authorized representatives.
- Bids not fulfilling minimum requirement as stipulated in the bidding documents shall be declared non-responsive. Financial proposal of such non-responsive / disqualified bidders shall be returned un-opened.
- In case the tender proceedings are not done on the scheduled date, the same shall be done on the next working day at the same place and time.
- In complete, conditional and bids without appropriate bid security shall not be considered.
- In case of any contradiction or discrepancy between this advertisement and contents of bidding documents, the contents of the bidding documents shall prevail.
- Procurement shall be carried out as per Government of Pakistan procurement Rules.
- The Tender notice is also available on the website of PARD which is [www.pard.gov.pk](http://www.pard.gov.pk).
- APPA agreement will be signed with successful bidder.
- The Firm/company/contractor minimum turnover requirement at least 450 million FY 22-23.
- Income tax return of 22-23 as a proof of turnover should also be attached to qualify for financial bid.

Deputy Director (Admin), Pakistan Academy for Rural Development, University Town, near KTH, PESHAWAR. Ph.091-9224472

PID(P)#  
010/2024

Deputy Director (Admin)  
PARD, Peshawar





# Govt decides to launch major literacy campaign

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Industries, Commerce and Technical Education Dr. Aamer Abdullah has said that the provincial government has decided to launch a major literacy campaign of “Ilam Da Tolo Dapara” (Education for All) to increase literacy rate in the merged districts.

He said that the aim of this campaign is to promote boys’ and girls’ education in these districts and added that in order to make this campaign successful, it has been decided to establish a

task force at the district level and to form a body of literacy experts who will supervise this campaign.

In a radio interview on Thursday, the caretaker minister said that it has also been decided to start a campaign to make dysfunctional educational institutions fully functional by increasing the enrollment of students in the merged districts.

While introducing technical education and skills training courses in general educational institutions, the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) has been assigned the task of conducting a feasibility study about identification

of suitable institutions for the purpose.

The caretaker minister expressed his views and said that a provincial task force has been set up under the leadership of the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to speed up the process of development in the merged districts. He added that the agenda of the recently held meeting of the task force was based on government steps related to the education sector in these areas, while several decisions have been taken regarding the campaign “Ilam da Tolo Dapara” to be launched to increase the literacy rate in the merged districts.

The caretaker minister further said that this step will be initiated from the current year’s academic session, in which a vigorous campaign will be launched to provide quality education in these areas by using the existing infrastructure without utilization of additional financial resources.

The caretaker minister said that a survey started for identification of ghost schools in the merged districts will be completed by January 20, while another need assessment survey is also being conducted to identify the needs and availability of education facilities there.



PESHAWAR: MD PTDC Aftab Rana and DG KP Tourism Authority Barkat Ullah exchanging documents regarding transfer PTDC Properties to Province. Minister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel also present.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Haji Ghulam Ali busy at his office work.

## Youth economic empowerment program: SCCI urges USAID-ERDA to double grant

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fuad Ishaq urged USAID-ERDA to double the grant, which was being given to youth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and newly merged districts (NMDs) for making them economically empowered.

He made this demand while speaking at the concluding ceremony of the first batch of ‘USAID-ERDA Youth Training in Business Planning and Management Program’ in a ceremony held in collaboration with Tie Islamabad at UET CEEC Peshawar here on Thursday.

Keynote speakers at the concluding ceremony were Engr. Dr. Abdul Shakoor, Ms. Sumera Abbasi, Executive Director, Tie

Islamabad, Dr. Shakeel Kakakhel, Deputy Chief of Party for USAID’s Economic Recovery and Development Activity (ERDA), Fuad Ishaq said the newly merged districts of KP situation is very challenging for our country, especially the youth of NMDs who are faced with difficult circumstances.

He, however, praised that USAID – ERDA has done exceptional work in empowering the youth of both NMDs and KP by providing a source of income, as job creation in these days is challenging one.

We are blessed to have such a bulk share of youth and by empowering them the country can certainly stride towards success.

The SCCI chief said the youth of NMDs are highly hardworking, and such op-

portunities will cater their potential to the highest.

Talking about promotion of regional trade, Fuad Ishaq said ample opportunities were available to improve trade with Afghanistan.

He added Afghanistan is now safe for trade, and provides a gateway to Central Asian Republics.

The SCCI chief suggested to USAID – ERDA that the grant of Rs1 million should be increased to Rs2 million. Fuad Ishaq also demanded soft loans should be provided with mark-up rate (4 – 5%), payable upto 12-years.

He furthermore said DFIs (Development Financial Institutions) along with IDBP (Industrial Development Bank of Pakistan) should be strengthened within our province.

## SSC exams postponed till April 18

PESHAWAR (INP): The annual SSC (9th and 10th grade) exams in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa previously scheduled on March 14, have been now postponed till April 18, 2024.

The decision has been taken after the requests from students and parents who expressed concerns about clashing with the holy month of Ramazan, traditionally observed in March or April.

Chairman of Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Peshawar emphasized the importance of considering Ramazan and respecting the sentiments of the community after students and parents requested them to do so. This sentiment was echoed during a meeting of all board chairmen in the province, leading to the unanimous decision to reschedule the exams.

## Industrialization inevitable for employment opportunities

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC), Javed Iqbal Khattak has said that industrialization is inevitable for creation of new employment and economic opportunities in the province.

In an informal chat with senior journalists at Peshawar Press Club (PPC) here on Thursday, he termed the installation of new industrial units and economic activities in Mohmand, Jalozai, Nowshera, Daraban (D.I.Khan) Hattar and Rashakai Special Economic Zone a step forward in this direction.

He said that Rashakai Special Economic Zone wherein work on several new industrial units is in last stages will usher industrial revolution and generate employment opportuni-

ties for thousands of youth.

The CEO KP-EZDMC said that the generation of employment opportunities at large scale is not possible within the limited resources of the government, saying the installation of new industrial units and industrialization should be kept atop the priorities of the government.

He said that presently thousands of workers are

working in the economic zones established under the auspices of the company. However, he stressed the need for making more efforts to make youth partners in the economic activities of the province.

Javed Khattak invited journalists to visit economic zones established in different parts of the province to review ongoing industrial activities by themselves.

On this occasion, he congratulated senior journalist, Arshad Aziz Malik for his re-election as president of Peshawar Press Club (PPC) for a second term.

Senior journalists commended the role of the CEO KP-EZDMC, Javed Iqbal Khattak for promotion of industrialization and economic activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

## Special Judge Anti-corruption grants bail to MS DHQ

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Special Judge Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Anti-Corruption Court Babar Ali Khan ordered release of Medical Superintendent (MS) District Headquarters Hospital Nowshera Dr. Mujtaba Ali on two personal sureties along with Rs80 thousand in alleged financial embezzlement, on Thursday.

The counsel Nauman Mohib Kakakhel advocate informed that Anti-Corruption had held MS Dr. Mujtaba Ali for allegedly

submitted driving license fees in his personal account despite in government’s treasury which baseless.

He argued that license fees are submitting in License Branch neither in DHQ hospital.

The petitioner is arrested for political victimization as Audit Report identified deficiency of Rs220 thousand didn’t submitted in treasury while adding that Anti-corruption lacks jurisdiction, the counsel argued. He added that the petitioner has been falsely implicated in the case.

The counsel Nauman Kakakhel advocate added that due to absence of independent evidence and witnesses, the case requires further probe for implicating the charges on petitioner. He added that there is nothing on record to infer that the petitioner has committed the alleged offence.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Anti-Corruption Court Special Judge Babar Ali Khan granted bail to MS DHQ Nowshera Dr. Mujtaba Ali after conclusion of arguments.

## ANP workers beat PTI leader at PHC premises

PESHAWAR (INP): Unruly Awami National Party (ANP) workers thrashed Fazal Muhammad Khan, Pakistan Tehreek-Insaf (PTI) leader who had defeated ANP’s Asfand Yar Wali in the 2018 general elections at the premises of the Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Thursday.

Reportedly, ANP workers kicked and punched Fazal during the hearing of a contempt of court case against the party Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) President Aimal Wali Khan.

PHC Chief Justice (CJ) Muhammad Ibrahim Khan had summoned Aimal today to explain his position over an interview.

The noise outside the courtroom disturbed the chief justice who had to say it aloud to the DSP security to keep the ANP workers silent so that he could focus on his job. “If you don’t silence them, I won’t hear the case,” the CJ Muhammad Ibrahim said.

## Chief lauds girl for helping poor

PESHAWAR (APP): Laiba Mahmood, a volunteer student of Pakistan Development Foundation (PDF) at Benazir Bhutto Shaheed University was given a letter of appreciation for managing aid for poor students.

Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Safia Ahmed and PDF Chairman Mohammad Bilal Sethi presented the letter to the volunteer student and praised her role.

Director of Student Affairs Dr Farhat Hamayun, Director of Women Development Centre Sobyha Karamat Chagharmati and University Spokesperson Sehrish Zaffar were also present on the occasion.

PDF Chairman Bilal Sethi said on the occasion that universities should establish a culture of focus on academics as well as social and business activities among students.

“Young people like Laiba Mahmood are our pride.” Vice Chancellor Shaheed Benazir Women’s University Professor Dr. Ghazala Yasmin Nizam said that this world is established because of people who feel the suffering of others. “In today’s inflationary era, we must step up our support for the poor,” she said.

He said that Benazir University is working to make students’ education as well as their community’s car journey citizens. The university is engaged in the preparation of students with a sense for which the support of institutions such as PDF is being sought.

He thanked Chairman PDF Bilal Sethi for providing student role-playing and financial support.

## Officers directed to stay and work till resolving of issues

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Irrigation, Communications and Works Ahmad Jan and Caretaker Provincial Local Government Minister

Aamir Nadeem Durrani have said that we all have to restore the original beauty of Abbottabad city by working responsibly on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa City Improvement Project.

The biggest problems of Abbottabad city are clean

drinking water, cleanliness, traffic restoration, shifting of solid waste and installation of solid waste plant and construction of Abbottabad Motorway Interchange.

They expressed these views while presiding over a high-level meeting of officers of various departments at Commissioner House Abbottabad on Thursday in light of the orders of caretaker Chief Minister KP Justice Retired Syed Arshad Hussain Shah.

Commissioner Hazara Division Syed Zaheerul Islam, Secretaries, Departments of Irrigation, Health, Local Government, C and W, Project Director KP City Improvement Project Syed Zafar Ali Shah, GM NHA, CEO WSSA, SE C&W, Chief Conservator Forest were present in the meeting, DPO Abbottabad, Deputy Commissioners Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Battagram, representatives of civil society, General Retd Ayaz Saleem Rana, Brig Retired Tirmizi, representatives of Abbottabad City Improvement Committee including retired military and civil officers, RM Sui Gas, Cantt Board officers and officers of other departments were also present.

Project Director KP City Improvement Program Syed Zafar Ali Shah briefed the meeting regarding the project. He said that in the

project, five major districts have been included in the KP CIP program, including Abbottabad. It includes Water supply, water treatment plant, solid waste management, green urban Space in Abbottabad, Salhal International Park and shifting of solid waste and solid waste treatment plant in Dhamtoor.

Provincial Ministers Ahmed Jan and Aamir Nadeem Durrani further said that wherever the problems are causing obstacles in the KP CIP project, District administration, representatives of civil society, officers of relevant departments and officers of KP CIP and WSSA should solve the problems together and start work on the project within two weeks and where there are problems in payment of land acquisition, people should be immediately paid. They directed the officers of KP CIP to stay and work until these issues are resolved.

The provincial ministers issued instructions to the deputy commissioners of the respective districts and the officers of the Revenue department that all patwaris and gardawars should be given regular targets and the deputy commissioner of each district should monitor the work himself so that this long-standing problem of the people is solved.



PESHAWAR: Secretary Higher Education Arshad Khan signing MoU with International Organization for Migration.

## WSSP launches enlightening book on water and cleanliness



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP) has unveiled a comprehensive book featuring essays on the proper utilization of water, sanitation, and hygiene in light of Islamic teachings.

The book titled “Water Usage and the Significance of Cleanliness in Light of Quran and Hadith,” comprises 25 essays authored by religious scholars, with financial support from

UNICEF. These essays delve into guidelines on water usage, emphasizing the significance of sanitation, cleanliness of the environment, and the teachings of the Quran and the Holy Prophet concerning personal and environmental hygiene.

The publication outlines the roles and responsibilities of both the public and the government, particularly water and sanitation utilities, in ensuring water conservation, sanitation, and

hygiene. It explains how wasting water and littering the environment violate legal, moral, and religious obligations.

The book was officially launched during a ceremony at Shaykh Zayed Islamic Centre, University of Peshawar. Notable among the attendants were UNICEF Chief Field Officer Radoslaw Rzehak, former provincial minister Qari Roohullah Madani, Special Secretary Local

Government Elections & Rural Development Department (LGE&RDD) Muhammad Asif Khan, Vice Chancellor of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Dr. Safia Ahmad, Director of the Center Dr. Rasheed Ahmad and Chief Executive Officer of WSSP Dr. Hassan Nasir.

Nazim-e-Taleem at of Jamia Islamia Darul Uloom Sarhad Peshawar, Sheikhul Hadith Ihsanul Haq Haqqani, and Islamiat Department of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University reviewed and endorsed the book.

The distribution of the book is planned for religious seminars, water and sanitation utilities, school students and teachers. The book can also be downloaded from official website of WSSP.

Speakers at the ceremony commended WSSP for this significant achievement, urging the public to read the book for personal and societal welfare.





## In brief

### Smuggling bid foiled, three held F.P. Report

MARDAN: The Excise police foiled a bid to smuggle heroin abroad and arrested three including key accused with swallowed capsules and his two facilitators here on Thursday. The Excise police Mardan region on a tip-off intercepted a suspected vehicle Ring Road Chamtar Chowk in Mardan with three people onboard heading to Islamabad International Airport. The police detained key accused identified as Naveed hailing from Kot Radha Kishan, district Kasur and his two facilitators. The key accused was taken to MMC Hospital where 57 swallowed capsules of heroin from his stomach. During the investigation, the accused disclosed that they were taking the smuggler to Islamabad from where he had a flight to Dubai. The Excise police took into custody the passport of the accused and started a further investigation after registering a case.

### People warned of fraud

SARGODHA (INP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) spokesperson has warned citizens to be cautious about the fraud being committed through fake messages on social media and cell numbers. "All BISP messages are sent from 8171 only, and those received from other numbers are fake messages," he said. The official social media accounts and website of the BISP could be accessed by the users to get authentic information about the programmes, added the spokesperson. The spokesman said: "The fake messages claim that stipends of the beneficiaries had been approved, and seek contact details for transfer of amount or promise inclusion in the BISP programme and issuance of the stipends. While the real messages from the BISP do not promise provision of any financial assistance without verification and documentation." For registration, it was necessary for the intending beneficiaries to visit the council office of the BISP with their Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) and B-Form for dynamic survey, which was free of charge, it added. The BISP also never warns any beneficiary to expel her/him from the programme, it said. Any information about the BISP programmes could be obtained from its helpline 080026477. The BISP offices established in every district could also be visited by citizens for the purpose.

### 8 citizens deprived of purses

FAISALABAD (INP): Accused of active snatcher gang deprived eight citizens including women of purses and cell phones in different localities of Faisalabad on Thursday. According to details, the culprits riding bikes snatched purse from Mehrun Nisar at Chen One road, another purse from wife of Mohsin Iqbal at Millat Road near Khajoori Wala Bagh and precious cell phone from Asia Alam in 215-RB. The street criminals snatched phone from Ramazan at Jaranwala road near Al-Shifa Hospital, cell phone from Syed Saifullah near Chhoti D-Ground in Peoples Colony, wallet from Shafiqur Rehman near Abdul Rasheed Ghazi Chowk, cell phone from a university student Malik Ali near Jhal Chowk Bridge and a precious cell phone from Babar Ali near Haseeb Shaheed Colony of Batala Colony. Police have registered separate cases in all incidents at respective police stations and started efforts to bust the gang.

# Judicial inquiry into funds' embezzlement in NMDs sought

## F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Executive director of a construction company and senior government contractor Haji Karim Khan has demanded the caretaker government to probe into the alleged embezzlement of MNAs funds of the previous Pakistan Tahreek Insaf government.

Talking to local journalists at Talash here on Thursday he alleged that most of the PTI members of national assembly awarded contracts to their blue-eyed contractors and the funds were miserably misused in the merged districts of Mohmand, Bajaur and Shabqadar. Haji Karim alleged that there had been no construction work on the grounds while millions of rupees had been spent on it. He said the officials of Pakistan Public Works Department were also involved in misuse of the funds meant for develop-

ment projects.

He alleged the concerned contractors had paid the MNAs in advance for getting contracts of their development projects. Haji Karim Khan demanded the caretaker government to initiate inquiries against the mega scam through judiciary and Pakistan army and the contractors involved in the funds' embezzlement should be punished and blacklisted.

**Boards's exams:** The Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Malakand's controller of examinations Muhammad Naseem Khan has said the annual examinations of the secondary school certificate (SSC) would be held from April, 18 instead of March.

Talking to local journalists at Timergara on Thursday he said the board had issued a fresh notification in this regard and now the SSC annual examinations would commence

from April, 18. He said the last date for submission of examination fee had been extended to Feb 6. The controller of examination said that annual examinations for intermediate classes would be held in the month of May.

**Award of tickets:** The Pakistan Peoples Party finally awarded its ticket for NA 7 Lower Dir to Alam Zeb advocate and for PK 16 to Kamran Zeb Khan. According to party sources several aspirants had submitted nomination papers for both the seats but the party awarded tickets to advocate Alam Zeb for NA 7 and Kamran Zeb Khan for PK 16.

The latter is the nephew of former provincial minister and PPP district president Mahmood Zeb Khan. Both are popular among youth of the area. Similarly the JUI-F awarded tickets for NA 7 to its district emir Sirajud Din and PK 16 to Maulana Muhammad Nabi Shah.

# Punjab govt spending billions for public welfare projects

## F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Deputy Commissioner Sundas Irshad has said that the Punjab government is spending billion of rupees to complete different development projects for upgrading living standard of the people in the district and district administration is committed to implement people friendly agenda of the government in letter and spirit.

While inspecting under construction road from Bhatti Chatha to Rameke Chatha being completed with the cost of Rs.130 million, she warned the officers of concerned department that strict action would be taken in case of use of substandard material and unjustified delay in completion of the development projects.

She directed the concerned officers to keep vigilant eye on construction of roads to ensure use of quality material as well as timely completion of the development projects. On this occasion, Chief Officer District

Council Shahzad Ahmad and Deputy Director Development Hafizabad Tassawar Abbas gave briefing about ongoing development projects in the district.

They informed the DC that with the completion of this road, it will be shortest route for motorist to travel from district Hafizabad to Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin, Alipur Chatha and other cities.

Meanwhile, Secretary District Road Transport Authority Hafizabad Muhammad Sohail Adil said that on the direction of the Punjab government, registration of passenger and loader Motorcycle Rickshaw have been started and a special registration counter have been setup for this purpose.

He said that no one would be allowed to run motorcycle rickshaw without registration according to the policy of the Punjab government. He said that rickshaw owners could submit their registration form to provide attested copies of CNIC, driving license, registration book. He

warned the rickshaw owners that strict action would be taken against unregistered rickshaws shortly.

Moreover, the Chairman Punjab Bait-ul-Mal Hafizabad district Hakeem Fada Hussain Bhatti said that the Punjab Bait-ul-Mall desire to stand the poor and less resources people at their foot and transparent distribution of funds among deserving people is top priority of the Punjab Bait-ul-Mall department.

He said that the Punjab government introduced an App for registration of deserving people and distributing funds for financial assistant which is getting popularity among society.

He also said that special training was imparted to Deputy Director Social Welfare Hafizabad Aamina Ashraf and members Bait-ul-Mall Hafizabad Ghulam Mustifa, Abdul Jabbar Raza Ansari, Mian Muhammad Akhtar, Madam Nighat Khan, Asif Sharif, Sanaullah, Syed Saffyan.



QUETTA: JUI provincial Ameer Mula Abdul Qadir addressing a press conference.

# Snowfall, ice skiing among five others features make Swat ideal winter tourists' destination of Pakistan

SWAT (APP): Known as Switzerland of Pakistan, Swat district started attracting a significant number of adventure and snow sports enthusiasts due to its seven unique features including snowfall, ice skiing, snow-capped mountainous valleys and trout fish, making it an ideal winter tourism destination of Pakistan.

Arriving for honeymoon at the breathtaking Kalam valley, Umar Khayam, a tourist of Nowshera district, was excited after seeing the mesmerizing natural beauty of Malam Jabba, Bahrain, Madain, and Gabin Jabba on Thursday. "Swat is my favorite winter tourists' destination due to its seven unique features including river rafting, adventure snow, ice hockey, trout fish, snowfall and easy accessibility through Swat motorway. It is my third consecutive yearly visit to Kalam and Malama Jabba to enjoy snowfall, skiing and its famous trout fish along with my family in its peaceful but cold weather," he told APP.

"I traveled many tourists' destinations of Pakistan in my life but hardly seen find together the combination of seven distinctive features including snowfall, river rafting, trout fish, motorway, Ghandhara civilization and ice skiing in any tourist destination of Pakistan," he said. Bakht Zada Khan, senior research officer of the archeology department said that Swat is home to primitive Gandhara civilization where every stone speak of the primitive age besides attracting monks and followers of Buddhism from across the world.

Besides Lord Bhudda artifacts and ancient stupas, ice skiing, river rafting, adventure sports, snow-clad mountain peaks, trout-fish, and Swat motorway enhanced Swat's significance. Attracting Buddhists, monks and archaeologists from across the world throughout the year, the Swat's archaeological treasures and ancient artifacts housed at Saidu Sharif Museum become a distinctive feature taking tourists to the glorious history of Swat. Tourists from

Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan, Charsadda, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Islamabad were seen in large numbers at Kalam, Malam Jabba and Bahrian hoping for snowfall. Another striking feature of Swat is skiing sports being played at Malam Jabba every year during winter and such sport was hardly placed in any part of the country.

Bakht Zada said these distinctive characteristics, which are second to none in any other district of the country, draw adventure sportsmen, archeologists, water rafters, mountaineers, snowfall lovers, foodies, and eco-tourists throughout the year. The 150-kilometer-long fresh-water of the river Swat originating from different glaciers and lakes including Mahodand and Gabral mountains offers unique opportunities for adventure sports enthusiasts to explore in a single day trip along with loved ones.

Fazagut, Fatehpur, Barikot, and Chakdara were most suitable for water rafting in river Swat and if developed on modern lines

could attract a large number of tourists during winter. River Swat is ideal for 'fish jumping and disappearing water sports' and introduction of such sports would help bolster the rural economy and promote tourism and transport industries in KP. Bestowed with more than 50 high-altitude small and big lakes, Swat's Mahodand lake is an exceptional source of attraction for tourists enjoying its blue- waters and boats riding amid cold breezes and snowfalls in winter.

Bakht Zada said Mahudand and Gabriel lakes carried unique charm and clean air besides nearby birds chanting valleys take tourists into a lap of serenity. "I have ordered two KG trout fish to enjoy with my family members," Umar Khyam said, adding green trout of Swat attract foodies at Kalam, Madain and other areas of the district. Besides its famous Deodar trees and precious wildlife, he said the Swat's snow-clad tall mountain ranges of Falakser, Mankial and Elum peaks offer great challenges to mountaineers and trekkers to

explore especially during winter. Likewise, its extensive plains and orchards that bear fruits and vegetables carried a unique comparative advantage compared to other tourists destinations of the country.

Tourism and culture authority spokesman said from January 1 to December 26th, 2023, a record 16,988,946 tourists visited KP mostly Malakand including Swat and Hazara divisions. These include 4,554 foreign tourists emphasizing the province's growing global recognition as Pakistan's friendly tourists and travel destination. Galyat valleys attracted 6.34 million tourists, 5.08 million by Naran Kaghan Valley and 3.54 million from Malam Jabba Swat.

Similarly, Upper and Lower Dir districts received 1,380,740 tourists, Lower Chitral's 591,330 tourists and Upper Chitral's 38,771 visitors during last year. To promote tourism in Khyber Pakthunkhwa, a project costing Rs238 million was prepared for organizing different winter sports and tourism events

in various districts including Swat. Besides Kalam's winter gala and sports rafting at River Swat, an international paragliding event at Saidu Sharif was also planned.

New tourist's spots would be developed at Sola Tanar, Puchar and Jargo valleys besides walking tracks to promote eco-tourism and adventure sports in Swat. Camping pods would be established at new tourists' destinations besides Kalash culture events in Chitral would be held. The provincial government was spending huge amounts on development and construction of new roads to line tourism destinations with the Swat motorway. Tourism police was made operational at Malakand and Hazara divisions to facilitate tourists. He said Tourism police were deployed on key places of Swat to facilitate tourists and snowfall lovers during winter season. The officials advised tourists to bring warm clothes and sweaters while coming to Upper Swat these days in the wake of chilly weather.



SANGHAR: Ms Aseefa Bhutto Zardari waving hands to public during public gathering.

## PFA imposes heavy fines on food outlets

### F.P. Report

DERA GHAZI KHAN: The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) on Saturday imposed heavy fines on grocery stores, milk shops, and bakeries in Dera Ghazi Khan and Bahawalpur divisions for not improving the quality of their products.

Punjab Food Authority (PFA) raided grocery stores, bakeries, and milk shops in DG Khan, Muzaffargarh, Layyah and Rajanpur districts on Thursday and imposed over Rs 130,000 fine on different violations. PFA teams also destroyed 85 kilograms of poor quality/expired food products including 40 kilograms expired food items, 16 litres of cinnamon Sherbat, 19-litre vinegar, and 10kg of other prohibited food items.

Rs 20000 fine was imposed on a superstore in block C, DG Khan city on selling adulterated spices and poor quality vinegar. Two superstores at Jail Road in Muzaffargarh faced a Rs 60000 fine for selling expired food items, a fine of Rs 14000 was imposed on a milk shop in Kot Addu for not showing a sale-purchase record while a hotel in Daira Deen Panah fined Rs 12000 on using adulterated spices in cooking food.

A famous bakery in Rajanpur fined Rs 10000 for using non-traceable items in preparing food products while another bakery at Chowk Azam in Layyah faced a Rs 15000 fine for poor cleanliness and not having medical certificates of workers.

## Student killed in mishap

MULTAN (INP): A university student was crushed to death in a collision between a motorcycle and a bus near Sewra Chowk here on Thursday.

A 24-year-old Farheen Fatima d/o Allah Dita resident of Shujabad was going to university on a motorcycle along with his brother when the bus of Multan Women University hit the motorcycle near Sewra Chowk. The rescue officials reached the spot and shifted the body to the morgue of Nishtar Hospital, however, the police started an investigation.

## Shifting of transport stands in Mardan directed

### F.P. Report

MARDAN: Secretary Provincial Transport Department Zia-ul-Haq and Commissioner Mardan Shaukat Ali Yousafzai have directed the concerned authority to immediately shift all transport addas located in Mardan to the newly constructed modern bus terminal in Chamtar Mardan.

These orders were issued during a meeting held here on Thursday regarding the transport department at the commissioner's office. Earlier, Commissioner Mardan Division Shaukat Ali Yousafzai welcomed the Secretary Transport on his arrival to Mardan.

Deputy Commissioner Mardan Muhammad Fayyaz Khan Sherpao, ADC (General) Saeedullah Jan, Secretary Regional Transport Authority Wajid Khan, TMO Naveed Gandapur and Assistant to Commissioner Revenue Fazlur Rehman besides Motor Vehicle Examiner Inayat Khan and other relevant officials were present in the meeting.

While giving a briefing on this occasion, it was informed that 1350 driving licenses are issued annually in Mardan region. Similarly, besides the general bus stand, there are dozens of stands of various categories. Transport Secretary said that because of category C and D bus stands in the city, there are traffic problems, therefore

shifting of all bus stands to the newly constructed bus terminal in Chamtar is inevitable.

The Transport Secretary directed the Regional Transport Authority to ensure provision of drinking water, clean toilets and all other facilities to the passengers including waiting rooms in all the bus stands of Mardan and Swabi.

Transport Secretary Ziaul Haque directed to implement the axle load management regime in both the districts and said that due to lack of this regime, the roads are being damaged with the increase in accidents. Similarly, he directed to conduct a campaign against smoke-emitting vehicles and said that these vehicles are polluting the environment. Commissioner Mardan Division Shaukat Ali Yousafzai also presented shield to the visiting secretary transport Mr. Ziaul Haq on this occasion.

**Arrangements for elections completed:** All the arrangements have been completed for conducting general elections in Mardan in a peaceful and transparent manner. Out of the total 1056 polling stations in the district, 390 have been declared highly sensitive, 416 sensitive and 250 normal. Similarly, out of total 763 polling stations in Swabi district, 80 have been declared highly sensitive, 333 sensitive and 350 normal.

On the polling day for

the election, a team of law enforcement agencies will be deployed in various polling stations keeping in mind their sensitivity. A logistics plan has also been made by the administration and police to deliver the polling materials to the polling stations, while a control room is also functioning at the divisional level to monitor election-related matters.

Foolproof arrangements have been made for the security of election rallies and gatherings. The concerned authorities have been contacted to meet the shortage of personnel for posting at the polling stations.

When contacted, Regional Police Officer Mardan Muhammad Sulaiman said that all necessary steps have been taken to conduct the elections in a peaceful manner in the districts of Mardan, Swabi Charsada Nowshera and Mohmand located in the Mardan region. He said that out of total 3388 polling stations, 1081 most sensitive, 1288 sensitive and 1019 normal have been declared for the elections on 10 seats of National Assembly and 25 seats of Provincial Assembly in the five districts of Mardan region.

He said that security will be provided at each polling station according to its sensitivity. Although there is a shortage of staff, work is being done at various levels and this shortage will be filled.

## Every one enjoys equal rights in Pakistan: Governor

### F.P. Report

QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar on Thursday said that the Constitution of Pakistan was the guarantor of equal rights, religious freedom and the right to express opinions to all citizens of Pakistan including all religious minorities.

He expressed these views while talking to a delegation of religious leaders from different religions under the leadership of Sardar Iqbal Khilji at the Governor's

House Quetta here. Governor Balochistan said that we were all residents of one country and one province due to our division, the nation as a whole suffers from internal weaknesses.

Therefore, it is important that we eliminate the contradiction in words and actions and become the governors of character along with speech, he noted. He said that it was our national tradition that we share in each other's sorrows and joys.

It is a fact that our primary identity is as human

beings, and so are geographical, ethnic, linguistic and religious divisions, he said. He said that instead of representing the majority or the minority, there was an urgent need to ensure the observance of the rights and powers of all citizens based on equality.

Governor Balochistan said that the need of the hour was to promote brotherhood, respect for differences of opinion, religious tolerance and harmony to make the country and province a cradle of peace and harmony.





## Fifteen dead in Papua New Guinea after day of looting, arson

SYDNEY (Reuters): Fifteen people were killed in widespread looting and arson in Papua New Guinea, Australian state broadcaster ABC reported on Thursday, as the South Pacific country's prime minister appealed for calm following a day of protests that turned ugly. Eight people died in riots in the capital Port Moresby while a further seven were killed in Lae, in the country's north, the ABC reported, citing an update from police.

A police and public sector protest over a pay cut that officials blamed on an administrative glitch descended into lawlessness over the day, with TV footage showing thousands in the streets of Port Moresby, many carrying what appeared to be looted merchandise as black smoke billowed over the city. Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape told a news conference on Thursday tensions

in the capital had subsided, with extra police being flown in to maintain order. "Police were not at work yesterday in the city and people resorted to lawlessness, not all people, but in certain segments of our city," he told a news conference on Thursday. The United States embassy in Port Moresby said police had returned to work, but that tensions remained high. "The relative calm can change at a moment's notice," it said in a statement, adding it had received reports of violence in several other areas of the country. Several Chinese citizens were lightly injured, with Chinese owned-stores subjected to vandalism and looting, the country's embassy said.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the country's high commission was monitoring the situation, and Canberra had not received any requests for help from

Papua New Guinea, which it regularly supports in policing and security. "We continue to urge calm at this difficult time. We haven't had any requests from the PNG government at this time but ... our friends in Papua New Guinea, we have a great relationship with them," Police in the Pacific Islands nation have struggled with a surge in violent crime over the past year. Marape has said boosting security would help to attract foreign investment in PNG's gold and copper resources. Police went on strike after discovering a reduction in their pay packets. The government circulated messages on social media denying that a new tax had been imposed on police, and Marape vowed to fix any administrative error that had caused the pay shortfall. An official told local radio FM100 that without police the city had "lost control".

### US says fuel shipment to Philippines coordinated with authorities

MANILA (Reuters): The US embassy in Manila said on Thursday that the US delivered fuel from one of its naval bases in Hawaii to a facility inside a former US base in the Philippines in coordination with the government. A Philippines senator had criticised the "inexplicable silence" over the shipment, which she said raised suspicions about the pre-positioning of military supplies in the country amid concerns about potential Chinese aggression towards Taiwan.

The senator, Imee Marcos, who is the president's sister, said the shipment amounted to 39 million gallons of fuel. A spokesperson for the U.S. embassy in Manila, Kanishka Gangopadhyay, said the delivery was "one of multiple shipments of safe, clean fuel" from a facility in Pearl Harbor to locations in the Pacific. He did not give details about the size of the shipment to Subic Bay, formerly a US Navy base in northern Philippines. "All shipments of fuel to Subic are conducted in full coordination with the appropriate authorities in the Philippine government, as well as our commercial partners," Gangopadhyay said. LSEG shipping data showed a US-registered oil tanker left Hawaii around Dec. 20 and arrived in waters off of the Philippines this week. The vessel is carrying clean fuel, the data shows. "Subic is not an EDCA site, so where in Philippine territory will millions of gallons of oil be stored?," Senator Marcos said.

EDCA, or the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement between the Philippines and the United States, gives the US access to military bases in the Southeast Asian country. President Marcos last year granted the United States access to four military bases, on top of five existing locations under the 2014 EDCA, which comes amid China's increasing assertiveness in the South China Sea and over Taiwan, which it views as its own territory. In a statement on Thursday, the Philippines' Department of National Defense said the shipment "is part of regular commercial transactions between the US Government and Philippine companies."

### UN helicopter carrying foreigners captured

MOGADISHU (Reuters): Al Shabaab militants captured a United Nations helicopter carrying two Somali men and several foreigners when it made an emergency landing in an area controlled by the Islamist group, a military official said. The aircraft encountered a defect shortly after taking off from Beledweyne city in central Somalia, Major Hassan Ali told Reuters, before it landed near Hindhere village, bordering Galguduud region.

"Two Somali men and several foreigners were onboard. It was also carrying medical supplies and it was supposed to transport injured soldiers from Galguduud region," he said. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) later confirmed there had been an incident involving a UN-contracted helicopter that was conducting an air medical evaluation.

## Iraq seeks quick exit of US forces but no deadline set: PM

BAGHDAD (Reuters): Iraq wants a quick and orderly negotiated exit of US-led military forces from its soil but has not set a deadline, Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said, describing their presence as destabilising amid regional spillover from the Gaza war.

Longstanding calls by mostly Shi'ite Muslim factions, many close to Iran, for the US-led coalition's departure have gained steam after a series of US strikes on Iran-linked militant groups that are also part of Iraq's formal security forces. Those strikes, which came in response to dozens of drone and missile attacks on US forces since Israel launched its Gaza campaign, have raised fears that Iraq could once again become a theatre for regional conflict.

"There is a need to reorganise this relationship so that it is not a target or justification for any party, internal or foreign, to tamper with stability in Iraq and the region," Sudani told Reuters in an interview in Baghdad. Giving the first details of his thinking about the future of the coalition since his Jan. 5 announcement that Iraq would begin the process of closing it down, Sudani said the exit should be negotiated under "a process of understanding and dialogue". "Let's agree on a time frame (for the coalition's exit) that is, honestly, quick, so that they don't remain long and the attacks keep happening," he said, noting that only an end to Israel's war on Gaza would stop the risk of regional escalation.

"This (end of the Gaza war) is the only solution. Otherwise, we will see more expansion of the arena of conflict in a sensitive region for the world that holds much of its energy supply," Sudani said. A US withdrawal would likely increase concern in Washington about the influence of arch foe Iran over Iraq's ruling elite. Iran-backed Shi'ite groups gained strength in Iraq after the 2003 US-led invasion. The Pentagon said it had no plans to withdraw US troops, which are in Iraq at the invitation of its government. Iraq, OPEC's second-largest oil producer, has been among the fiercest critics of Israel's Gaza campaign, describing the mass killing and displacement of Palestinian civilians as a textbook case of genocide, claims Israel vehemently denies.

But Iraq's government has repeatedly also said the attacks by armed groups on foreign forces and diplomatic missions in Iraq were illegal



and went against the country's interests, and says it has arrested some perpetrators and prevented attacks. At the same time, Baghdad has condemned US strikes on bases used by the groups, as well as a recent strike against a senior militia commander in the heart of Baghdad, as grave violations of sovereignty. Critics say the armed groups, including Kataeb Hezbollah and Haraket Hezbollah al-Nujaba, use their status as members of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), a state security force that began as a grouping of militias in 2014, as a cover. When striking at US forces, they operate outside the chain of command under the banner of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq; when the US retaliates, they mourn their losses as members of the PMF and reap the rewards of rising anti-US sentiment.

US-led forces invaded Iraq and toppled former leader Saddam Hussein in 2003, withdrawing in 2011 but then returning in 2014 to fight Islamic State as part of an international coalition. The US currently has some 2,500 troops in Iraq. With Islamic State territorially defeated in 2017 and on the demise ever since, Sudani said the coalition's raison d'etre had long-since ended. But calls for the coalition's withdrawal have been around for years and, so far, little has changed. Iraq's parliament in 2020 voted for its departure days after the US assassinated top Iranian general Qassem Soleimani and a senior Iraqi militant commander in a strike outside Baghdad airport. The

next year, the US announced the end of its combat mission in Iraq and a shift to advising and assisting Iraqi security forces, a move that changed little on the ground.

The Gaza war has put the issue back in centre stage, with many Iraqi groups that brought Sudani's government to power and are close to Tehran calling for the final exit of all foreign forces, a move long sought by Iran and its regional allies. The chief of Lebanon's Hezbollah group, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, said in a speech on Friday that US strikes in Iraq should pave the way for the final withdrawal of US forces from Iraq, which would also make their presence in northeastern Syria untenable. Sudani said he was seeking the coalition's exit because Iraq could now defend itself from terrorism and should exert full sovereignty over its territory - thereby avoiding giving anyone an excuse to draw Iraq into regional conflict. "Ending its presence will prevent more tensions and the entanglement of internal and regional security issues," Sudani said.

He said Iraq was open to establishing bilateral relations and engaging in security cooperation with coalition nations, including the US. This could including training and advising Iraqi security forces as well as weapons purchases. The US "is not an enemy to us and we are not at war with it, but if these tensions continue it will definitely impact and create a gap in this relationship," he said.

## Trump says he knows his VP pick, conditions NATO commitment on European treatment

DES MOINES, Iowa (Reuters): Donald Trump said that he knows who he wants for his running mate in the 2024 race for president and that his commitment to the NATO alliance will depend on how Europeans treat the United States.

The frontrunner for the Republican nomination, Trump was asked by anchors at a live Fox News town hall who was under consideration for vice president on his ticket. "I can't tell you that really. I mean I know who it's going to be," Trump told the gathering of Republican voters in Des Moines, Iowa, five days before that Midwestern state's first-in-the-country nominating contest. In a follow-up question he was asked whether he would be open to mending ties with any of his rivals in the race, to which he responded: "Oh sure, I will." Speculation about a running mate has focused in part on Elise Stefanik, a Trump ally and fourth-ranking Republican in the House of Representatives, and on Nikki Haley, a rival who was UN ambassador from 2017-18 during Trump's administration. Trump was asked about his stance on NATO - a question that followed the disclosure that Trump told top European officials while he was

president that the United States would never help Europe if it came under attack.

"Depends if they treat us properly," Trump said when asked by the Fox anchors about his commitment to the NATO alliance. "Look, NATO has taken advantage of our country. The European countries took advantage." During his first term from 2017 to 2021, Trump repeatedly clashed with traditional allies over trade and defense spending. Trump's town hall, counter-programming to a debate he spurned between his rivals for the nomination, Haley and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, took place just hours after former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie ended his bid.

Christie had failed to gain momentum in a campaign centered on fierce criticism of Trump's policies and character, and Trump was asked whether he would consider him for a running mate. "I don't see it," he said. "That would be an upset, Christie for vice president." Trump retains a commanding lead in the contest to be the party's nominee against President Joe Biden in the Nov. 5 election, according to a nationwide Reuters/Ipsos poll completed. The poll put him at 49%, ahead of Haley at 12% and DeSantis

at 11%.

Trump said he was not worried that Christie's support in New Hampshire - pegged at 12% in a RealClearPolitics aggregate of poll numbers - might shift to Haley, who sits at 29%. Trump is in the lead at 43%. Christie's base of support was greatly concentrated in New Hampshire, the northeastern US state that holds the second Republican nominating contest on Jan. 23 after Iowa. "I'm not exactly worried about it," Trump said. "I love the people. They love me, I think."

Trump noted that Christie was overheard predicting that Haley was "gonna get smoked" in the race and was "not up to" the job of the presidency, saying he agreed with Christie. "I know her very well and I happen to believe that Chris Christie is right. That's one of the few things he's been right about actually," he said. In their debate, DeSantis and Haley sought to emerge as the clear alternative to Trump just days before the campaign's first votes are cast. But with the former president absent once again from the debate stage, the rivals focused much of their ammunition on each other, rather than Trump, the frontrunner.

## Ukraine is 'test site' for NK missiles: S Korea

WASHINGTON (Reuters): The United States and its allies condemned what they described as Russia's firing of North Korean missiles at Ukraine, with Washington calling it abhorrent and Seoul calling Ukraine a test site for Pyongyang's nuclear-capable missiles.

Speaking at a UN Security Council session on the nearly two-year-old war ignited by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Russia's envoy said the United States seemed to be spreading "wrong" information. But he stopped short of outright denying that Russia was using North Korean arms, which Deputy US Ambassador to the UN Robert Wood and other US allies said would violate UN resolutions.

"It's abhorrent that a permanent member of the UN Security Council is flagrantly violating Council resolutions to attack another UN member state, violations that further the suffering of the Ukrainian people, support Russia's brutal war, and undermine the global nonproliferation regime," Wood said. Earlier, the United States and seven other nations accused Russia of exploiting its position as a veto-holding permanent member of the Council by

acquiring North Korean missiles and firing them into Ukraine in violation of Council resolutions. "A permanent Security Council member that willingly engages in these violations demonstrates a clear exploitation of its position," said a statement by permanent Council members Britain, France and the United States, non-permanent members Malta, Slovenia and South Korea as well as Japan and Ukraine.

The fact that Russia holds a veto on the Council, as do Britain, China, France and the United States, effectively guarantees the body cannot punish Moscow. The White House said last week that Russia recently used short-range ballistic missiles sourced from North Korea to conduct multiple strikes against Ukraine, citing newly declassified intelligence. Moscow and Pyongyang have both denied conducting any arms deals but they vowed last year to deepen military relations. Russia recently has launched some of its most intense strikes on Ukraine since it invaded almost two years ago. Russian UN Ambassador Vasily Nebenzya said Western states had called the Security Council ses-

sion as an exercise in "anti-Russian propaganda" but stopped short of making an unequivocal denial that Moscow had fired North Korean missiles at Ukraine.

"Today, Western members of the Security Council repeated the 'fact' that the Russian military is using missiles from the DPRK in its special military operation in Ukraine," Nebenzya said, saying a Ukrainian Air Force representative had denied there was any evidence "of this 'fact.' So the US seems to be spreading information that is wrong without going through the trouble of checking this beforehand." South Korea's ambassador said Russia's use of North Korean missiles gave Pyongyang "valuable technical and military insights" about its arms. "By exporting missiles to Russia, the DPRK uses Ukraine as the test site of its nuclear-capable missiles," said South Korean envoy Hwang Joon-kook. "Some experts assess that the missiles fired into Ukraine are KN-23s, which the DPRK claims can deliver nuclear warheads," he added, saying one flew 460 km, the distance from a North Korean launch site to South Korea's city of Pusan. "From the ROK standpoint, it amounts to a simulated attack," he said.

## Zelenskiy sees 'clear signs' of slowdown in Russian defence industry

KYIV (Reuters): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said there were "clear signs of a slowdown" in Russia's defence industry and called for further action to eliminate loopholes in sanctions imposed on Moscow. Zelenskiy, speaking in his nightly video address, provided no evidence for his assertion on the state of the Russian defence industry. Russian officials have said that production of military equipment has been stepped up.

"There are clear signs of a slowdown in Russia's defence industry," Zelenskiy said. "But for the results of sanctions to be 100%, sanctions loopholes must also be blocked 100%."

Sergei Chemezov, the head of Russian state-

owned defence conglomerate Rostec, told President Vladimir Putin last month that production of many fundamental items of equipment had risen significantly over the last two years. In comments appearing on the Kremlin website, Chemezov said production of small arms and artillery ammunition had increased by a factor of 50, production of light armoured vehicles by five and a half times and tanks sevenfold. In his remarks, Zelenskiy said a meeting of commanders and ministerial officials had considered supplies of weapons and boosting domestic production. Logistics, he said, "must be speeded up," he said. "Despite all the problems in the world, our careful, clear approach to every need, to every

opportunity, is able to provide the defence forces with everything they need," he said. And participants discussed air defences - often cited as Ukraine's priority - a day after units destroyed 18 of 51 Russian missiles, a much lower shoot-down rate than normal.

Authorities attributed that figure to the large number of ballistic missiles fired by Russia, more difficult to intercept. "We analysed separately and in detail the work of our air force, of forces defending our skies," Zelenskiy said. "The results of downing Russian missiles and drones. What we managed to do. And what we need to do." Zelenskiy said last month that Ukraine intended to produce one million drones in 2024.

## Navalny says he's been put in a punishment cell in an Arctic prison colony

TALLINN, Estonia (AP): Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny said that officials at the Arctic penal colony where he is serving a 19-year sentence have isolated him in a tiny punishment cell over a minor infraction, the latest step designed to ramp up pressure on President Vladimir Putin's fiercest political foe.

Navalny said in a social media statement relayed from behind bars that prison officials accused him of refusing to "introduce himself in line with protocol" and ordered him to serve seven days in a punishment cell. "The thought that Putin will be satisfied with sticking me into a barracks in the far north and will stop torturing me in the punishment confinement was not only cowardly, but naive as well," he said in his usual sardonic manner.

Navalny, 47, is jailed on charges of extremism. He had been imprisoned in the Vladimir region of central Russia, about 230 kilometers (140 miles) east of Moscow but was transferred last month to a "special regime" penal colony - the highest security level of prisons in Russia - above the Arctic Circle. His allies decried the transfer to a colony in the town of Kharp, in the Yamalo-Nenets region about 1,900 kilometers (1,200 miles) northeast of Moscow, as yet another attempt to force Navalny into silence. The remote region is notorious for long and severe winters. Kharp is about 100 kilometers (60 miles) from Vorkuta, whose coal mines were part of the Soviet gulag prison-camp system. "It is almost impossible to get to this colony; it is almost impossible to even send letters

there. This is the highest possible level of isolation from the world," Navalny's chief strategist, Leonid Volkov, has said on X, formerly known as Twitter. Navalny has been behind bars since January 2021, when he returned to Moscow after recuperating in Germany from nerve agent poisoning that he blamed on the Kremlin. Before his arrest, he campaigned against official corruption and organized major anti-Kremlin protests.

He has since received three prison terms, rejecting all the charges against him as politically motivated. Until last month, Navalny was serving time at Penal Colony No. 6 in the Vladimir region, and officials there regularly placed him in a punishment cell for alleged minor infractions. He spent months in isolation.



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## Judicial appugn and lack of merits

ACCORDING to the media, Justice Sayyed Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi of the Supreme Court of Pakistan tendered his resignation a day after his plea to halt the ongoing misconduct proceedings at the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) was turned down by the competent authority. Justice Mazahar Naqvi forwarded his resignation to President Arif Alvi stating that it has become very difficult for him to continue his work as a judge in the Supreme Court of Pakistan in the current situation.

The former judge of the Apex court was currently under the scrutiny of the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), the top-most judicial forum to oversee Judges' performance and conduct while ensuring accountability of the people who announce verdicts on others and issue certificates of Sadiq and Ameen to the rest of the country. A three-member bench led by Justice Aminuddin Khan was also pitching him to appear in the court and defend serious charges against him leveled by a few citizens but Justice Naqvi was trying to elude justice on one or the other pretext. Previously, Justice Naqvi failed twice in responding to the show cause notices issued by the Supreme Judicial Council in connection with multiple complaints of corruption and professional misconduct against the concerned judge. According to reports, in his constitutional petition, Justice Naqvi contended that the complaints lodged against him at the Supreme Judicial Council were based on mala fide intentions, however, the concerned judge neither responded to show cause notices and submitted proof of his innocence nor cooperated with the Police or judicial body to complete the legal process. Meanwhile, the jury wonders how it determines the mala fide intentions of the complainants and proves the innocence of their colleagues. The nation is astonished at why Pakistani judges do not trust their department, avoid appearing before their colleague judges, and often try to elude the court proceeding/ justice by using their professional knowledge, departmental contacts, and bureaucratic nexus in a bid to foil the system.

Historically, the Pakistani judiciary fell victim to multiple institutional biases including corruption, nepotism, and no accountability of adjudicators and the lower staff that turned the justice delivery into a lucrative business causing serious social, legal, and administrative challenges for the society, as well as the government. Although, there had been rumors in public regarding the trading of justice, the availability of paid witnesses and frontmen of the adjudicators who help facilitate the criminals in bartering bail/pardon in reward of money/plots or luxury vehicles for the judges and their family members. Although, there have been media reports and table talks regarding alleged corruption in the judiciary, but the former Army Chief General Retired Qamar Javed Bajwa categorically accused the senior judges in his interview of shedding off merit and transparency in their under-trial cases in the fulfillment of mere desires of their spouses, and children through the announcement of tainted verdicts and villainous justice.

In fact, Pakistani judges failed to set high moral ethics and professionalism as they always sought personal agendas, popularity, and monetary benefit instead of protecting their ego and professional sanctity. There is a common trend that judges and generals perceive themselves above the law and often try to elude justice in a fake display of ego and professional superiority. Previously, Justice retired Javed Iqbal, former Chairman NAB did not appear before the inquiry commission in connection with a complaint against him regarding misbehaving with a lady, while General Retired Faiz Hameed refused to cooperate with the inquiry commission on Faizabad Dharna. The same is the case with Justice Naqvi, who trades in blame games and feels betrayed by his colleagues if they don't meet his expectations.

Pakistani leaders whether in politics, judiciary, military, police, or civil bureaucracy usually have a low profile and reach top positions through nepotism and entreaty instead of merit. They lag courage in setting standards for their successors, hence each institution faces moral decay and professional degradation that seriously spoil the overall functioning of the society. Amid such dire situation, it is of utmost importance that we educate our coming generation in morality and social ethics instead of memorizing books and copy-casting Western modernism. So, we can emerge as a strong nation in this world.

## Future of Ukraine war

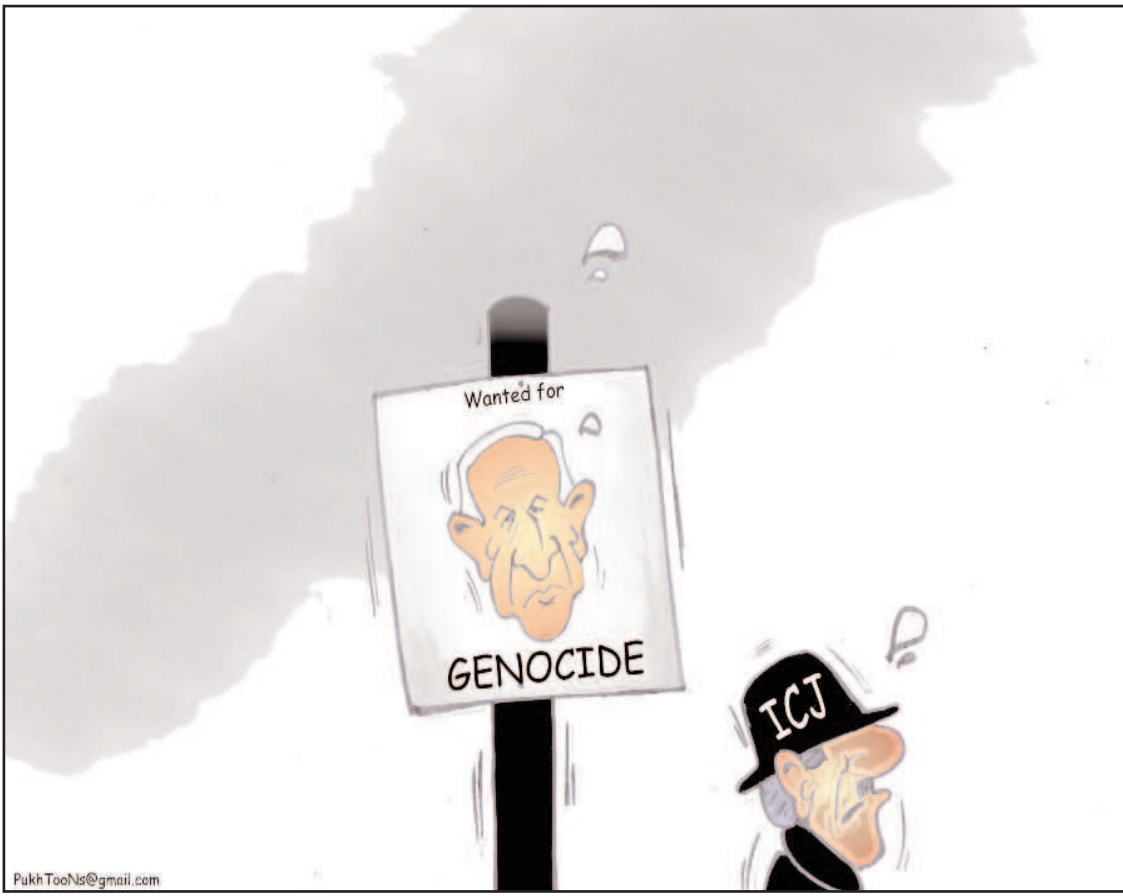
UKRAINE'S President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is currently on a tri-nations trip of the Baltic states that aimed at shoring up support for Kiev's war effort against its staunch adversary. President Zelenskyy started his trip from Lithuania, moving on to Latvia and Estonia, while motivating Ukraine's western allies to shed off war fatigue and allocate more funds and resources to keep Ukraine's warmachine functioning against Moscow that not only successfully neutralized Ukrainian counter offensive but secured significant successes against western alliance after gaining vital crucial support from Pyongyang.

The United States and allies apparently seem to be tired from the years-long conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The western nations, who have been fueling the Ukraine war through their mammoth economic and military assistance to Kiev for the almost past two years since February 24, 2022, is now gradually shedding their responsibility from the war expenses and the provision of arsenal to Ukrainian troops. Ukraine has been appealing in recent months to its Western allies for more economic and military assistance, to fulfill its war needs and provide kitchen heating to his people but those appeals have not worked well as the EU and the United States aid packages worth billions of dollars were stalled due to domestic legal constraints or shortage of funds. Recently, Italy's Defense Minister has recently told Italian parliament that the Ukrainian counteroffensive had not produced the desired result, and the military situation had to be viewed with realism. According to him, it is time for incisive diplomacy, alongside military support for Ukraine.

In fact, war is not a solution to any political or territorial dispute while the Ukraine war was the product of the ongoing competition between major powers to attain global supremacy which ruined Ukraine and turned the East European nation into rubles. Presently, Moscow has expressed its readiness for peace talks if Ukraine takes account of new realities, suggesting an acknowledgement of Russian controls over 17.5 percent of Ukrainian territories in Eastern Ukraine. While Ukraine's stance appears less uncompromising and no common ground exists between the two challengers so far. Presently, Ukrainian President is wholly dependent on western allies.

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## Why Trump's immunity claim fell flat in court

ON Tuesday, the DC Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments in Donald Trump's appeal of the trial court's rejection of his claim that he has absolute criminal immunity. The former president's presence in court signaled the issue's exceptional importance. While it is sometimes difficult to predict from judges' questions where they are heading, the argument strongly suggests Trump is going to lose - and resoundingly.

Right out of the gate, Judge Florence Pan, who emerged as the panel's most incisive questioner, presented Trump's counsel John Sauer with a hypothetical that exposed the unthinkable consequences of Trump's extreme position: Could a president who used his official authority to order SEAL Team Six to assassinate a political rival ever be prosecuted?

The question answers itself, and Sauer couldn't square his client's immunity claim with that and other confounding hypotheticals about extreme presidential action - an ominous sign for how Trump's appeal will ultimately fare. At that point, and time and again on Tuesday, Sauer attempted to rely on an escape hatch - one that malfunctioned badly. He argued that his position was not extreme because of a purported constitutional out: the impeachment judgment clause. He argued over and over again that the Constitution did allow prosecution of an ex-president - but only after he or she had been impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate for the same conduct.

But the panel was having none of it, refusing to take that entirely novel argument seriously. A key problem with the argument is that the impeachment judgment clause says the opposite of what Sauer claims. It states that "the Party convicted [in an impeachment trial] shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishment, according to Law." In other words, the clause enshrines the rule that presidents can still be prosecuted even if they're convicted of impeachment, not that presidents can be prosecuted only if they're

Laurence Tribe, Norman Eisen &amp; Taylor Redd

first convicted by the Senate. Indeed, a central argument that senators defending Trump made at his 2021 impeachment trial was that his acquittal would leave him fully accountable for criminal prosecution later on. And as the judges underscored on Tuesday, Trump's own counsel admitted the availability of later prosecution at the time.

accountability - gets separation of powers backwards and upends the rule of law. Indeed, the one judge on the panel thought most likely to be favorably inclined toward Trump, Judge Karen Henderson, who was appointed by President George H.W. Bush, pointedly remarked that it seemed paradoxical to say that a president's constitutional duty to take care that

prosecution in this criminal case. But even if that standard were extended from the civil to the criminal setting, it would cover only conduct falling within the "outer perimeter" of a president's official duties. Tellingly, the judges seemed to suggest that even if "outer perimeter" criminal immunity did exist, one could not reasonably conclude that the conduct allegedly committed by the former president is shielded by Fitzgerald's generous standard. To treat it as protected by Fitzgerald would require considering a president's efforts to overturn the lawful results of an election as part of his official duties. The Constitution's framers would be aghast by that even as an idea, let alone as the law. The panel seemed to agree, with Judge Childs noting prosecutors' argument that Trump engaged in his scheme not to carry out his official duties as president but rather to secure his re-election to that post.

**As Judge Michelle Childs pointedly noted to Trump's counsel, Trump's immunity claim is irreconcilable with this nation's history: Why, for example, would President Gerald Ford have pardoned Richard Nixon, if absolute criminal immunity existed? Trump also attempted to argue that the DC Circuit should apply the civil immunity standard, which was established by the Supreme Court in Nixon v. Fitzgerald, to preclude his prosecution in this criminal case. But even if that standard were extended from the civil to the criminal setting, it would cover only conduct falling within the "outer perimeter" of a president's official duties.**

Accordingly, Judge Pan took Sauer to task by noting that he really wasn't even arguing that there was absolute immunity, but was claiming that an impeachment conviction was simply a precondition for prosecution. Her implication was clear: If the court brushed aside his nonsensical interpretation of the impeachment judgment clause, there was nothing to stop this prosecution of Trump. Over and over, both Trump's counsel and the government, represented by assistant special counsel James Pearce, returned to one key issue: the separation of powers - the constitutional's complex and dynamic division of authority among the executive, legislative and judicial branches.

Team Trump tried to press the argument that this doctrine mandates presidential immunity. But placing presidents above the law - by making them immune from criminal

the laws be faithfully executed entitles him to violate those very laws. The separation of powers principle is among the reasons why there is no express constitutional provision permanently immunizing presidents for crimes committed while in office. Faced with that problem on Tuesday, Trump turned to the structure of the Constitution and its framers' intent. But his arguments were left in tatters by the special counsel and indeed by the judges' questions. As Judge Michelle Childs pointedly noted to Trump's counsel, Trump's immunity claim is irreconcilable with this nation's history: Why, for example, would President Gerald Ford have pardoned Richard Nixon, if absolute criminal immunity existed?

Trump also attempted to argue that the DC Circuit should apply the civil immunity standard, which was established by the Supreme Court in Nixon v. Fitzgerald, to preclude his

Talmiz Ahmad

on this scale.

The popular mood in Iran is one of rage at the failure of the state authorities to provide security to their people, particularly when they otherwise harshly handle all expressions of internal dissent. News reports are awash with people angry at Iran's failure to respond effectively to several earlier attacks from the US, Israel and Daesh. Officials' tough rhetoric has been condemned as "empty and fake," while there have been calls for an end to the policy of "strategic restraint." Observers have warned that Daesh has been emboldened largely because there had been no response to earlier American and Israeli attacks. One senior official even called on Iran to launch a joint attack with its allies to deter future assaults by Israel.

Though there are Daesh stragglers in Syria and Iraq, the Kerman bombing is believed to be the handiwork

of the entity in Afghanistan, which is referred to as Daesh Khorasan. It remains deeply hostile to the Taliban administration in Kabul and has targeted it on several occasions. As Iran has now moved fresh troops to the Afghanistan and Pakistan borders, it is likely that it will target the group's positions, most probably in the Afghan province of Herat. However, given the mountainous terrain, the extent of the damage is likely to be minimal. While Iran will have to contend with the threat from Daesh Khorasan, it will remain a sideshow compared to the challenges emerging from the Gaza war. Iran is at the heart of the ongoing conflict: It is close to Hamas and is the powerful sponsor of militias in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Popular Mobilization Units in Iraq and the Houthis in Yemen. They constitute the regional "axis of resistance" and are

## Gaza protesters in US need to win hearts and minds

Ray Hanania

ISRAEL'S massively violent and indiscriminate response to the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks, killing more than 22,000 people, including some 10,000 children, has provoked widespread international condemnation. But while US President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken have expressed unrestrained outrage at the Hamas violence, their response to the far worse violence by Israel has been tepid at best. Rather than pressure Israel's government to prevent the killing of civilians, the US has given Israel billions of dollars in aid and provided an endless supply of weaponry, including missiles, bombs and ammunition, which is being used to drive up the number of civilian casualties.

The Biden administration's stance on the Gaza conflict has prompted many Americans, including the country's large Palestinian population, to organize protests in cities across the country. These protests have all advocated one strong and moral message: they want the US to use its considerable influence over Israel's government to force a lasting ceasefire, something it has so far rejected. These protests have attracted tens of thousands of demonstrators, including many non-Arabs who are equally outraged by the double standards of the American response, which treats Arab lives as inconsequential and Israeli and Jewish lives as sacrosanct.

The one-sided nature of the carnage has fired up emotions and fueled a sense of outrage among the non-Arab Americans who have joined in or supported the protests in many American cities and at university campuses across the country. The result has been the largest outpouring of solidarity with Palestine in the nation's history. The protests have broken records, with about 300,000 people attending one demonstration in Washington in November. The media has not been fair in its coverage of the protests, just as it has failed to cover the day-to-day carnage caused by Israel's assault.

Protests have repeatedly been held in Chicago, Houston, New York, Orlando, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Seattle, Portland, Philadelphia and dozens of other cities. Chicago alone has seen 12 large protests. The problem, though, is what are the pro-Palestinian protests intended to achieve? And are they achieving positive results? Or are the protests merely worsening anti-Arab feelings, which have already been aggravated by biased media coverage and the anti-Arab rhetoric of the majority of America's elected officials?

On the one hand, the first priority of a protest is to elevate the moral outrage of the public to a level that reflects the degree of violence against civilians. But on the other hand, another purpose is to win the empathy and support of the wider public to

counter the bias of the news media, the pro-Israel politicians and the double standards of the Biden administration. Americans constantly assert that they are the champions of civil rights and that their nation embraces a constitution that guarantees freedoms that are championed throughout the world. So far, however, the protesters have not seemed too concerned about winning the hearts and minds of the American public. Instead, they have exerted most of their efforts on using the muscle of the massive protests.

Instead of winning over the American public, they are actually fueling anger - not at the carnage in Gaza but at the disruption the protests have caused. In many cases, protesters have intentionally blocked major expressways, causing great inconvenience. In Chicago, they have blocked every major route, forcing people to sit in their cars for hours as police attempt to break up the protest. In New York, the protesters intentionally blocked the city's bridges, causing long delays for people trying to get to and from work. It is possible to protest in a nondisruptive manner and still send a strong message to the American people. But it is a poor strategy to disrupt the daily lives of Americans and cause them aggravation. If they become angry with the disruptions, they will become distracted and even less caring about the violence in Gaza.

This does not even address some of the messaging that is being displayed at the protests, which is on occasions both anti-American and antisemitic. This plays into the hands of Israel, which has American politics in a powerful headlock. The protests need to be reorganized and held in a way that is less disruptive to the everyday lives of Americans.

What can be done to win American empathy? Plenty. Imagine if every protester boycotted their local newspaper. Protesters could also have a huge impact by sending letters to Biden, Blinken and their local members of Congress. Instead of signs with angry slogans criticizing Americans, publish the pictures of the carnage and let Americans see what they cannot see in the mainstream news media. Hold press conferences and carefully and effectively detail how Israel's government is violating human and civil rights and killing civilians. Personalize the story with the names and details of some of the Palestinian civilians who have been killed, especially Palestinian Americans.

Do not be disruptive. Show the American public that, while you are angered by the violence in Gaza, you also care about their rights and you want their support. Yes, Americans need to see the carnage that is being minimized by the media and their politicians. But they cannot do that when their lives are disrupted by delays that cause them aggravation. That is not the way to win friends, it is a formula for making more enemies.

## Bomb-scarred Iran could be at heart of regional inferno

TWO explosions last week surged through crowds at the mausoleum of former Quds Force commander Gen. Qassem Soleimani in Kerman. Thousands of people were there to mourn their great national hero, who had been killed by American missiles in Baghdad four years earlier. The first bomb was ignited just 700 meters from the shrine; the second exploded 15 minutes later about a kilometer away, killing many of those who had fled from the earlier attack.

Nearly 90 people were killed, making this the most lethal attack in Iran since the truck bombing of the Islamic Republican Party's headquarters in Tehran in 1981, in which 74 people were killed.

As the nation reeled from these double blows, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei blamed the country's "malicious and criminal enemies," without identify-

ing anyone specifically. But other officials were quick to point fingers at the US and Israel. This was a particularly charged accusation since, a day earlier, Israeli missiles had killed senior Hamas leader Saleh Al-Arouri in Beirut. He had been Hamas' principal link with Hezbollah and Iran. A week before that attack, Israel had killed Sayyed Razi Mousavi, a senior Quds Force official, in Damascus.

Tensions were defused when Daesh subsequently claimed responsibility for the horrendous Kerman attack. Its statement identified two suicide bombers who had detonated their vests amid the gathering of "polytheists" at the grave of the "hypocrite" commander. Since then, 12 people have been arrested in six different provinces. Officials have identified one bomber as a Tajik, but no other details have become public so far. There were earlier attacks in Iran attributed to Daesh, but none that caused casualties

together engaged in a war of attrition, hitting Israeli and US targets.

Since early October, Hezbollah has been regularly targeting Israeli assets and has tied down several military units at Israel's northern border, while diverse militias from the PMU have launched more than 100 attacks on US targets in Iraq. Both have invited Israeli and US retaliation, including targeted killings. Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping have proven most effective as, since November, they have threatened global maritime flows. They have been demanding increased humanitarian aid for the beleaguered Palestinians in Gaza. The Israeli mass killings in Gaza, with no strategic objective or endgame in mind, have aggravated regional security concerns and brought the long-standing Iran-Israel "shadow war" to the center of the regional scenario. The principal concern now

is that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu may opt for a nationwide conflict.

Following the rejection of his judicial reforms by the Supreme Court, he is facing popular calls for his resignation, arrest and incarceration. Hence, he may judge this to be a good opportunity to exterminate both Palestinian resistance and Hezbollah and turn Israel's guns on Iran.

With Iran hit hard by the Kerman tragedy and with a long record of Israeli violence that remains unavenged, its leaders may find themselves no longer able to sustain their commitment to "strategic patience." This dangerous situation calls for the US to abandon its pusillanimous approach and insist on an immediate ceasefire, to be followed by a dialogue on Palestinian aspirations. Otherwise, the tragedy of Kerman could plunge the Middle East into a regional conflagration.

Arab News



# Can President Boakai deliver war crimes justice in Liberia?

**JOSEPH Boakai, who secured a narrow victory against incumbent George Weah in a November run-off election, is set to be inaugurated as Liberia's new president on January 22. The 78-year-old political veteran won the tightly contested race on a promise to address corruption, work towards societal "peace and reconciliation" and deliver justice to the many victims of Liberia's civil wars (in 1989-1997 and 1999-2003), which killed more than 200,000 people and displaced millions of others.**

As two decades have passed since the end of the latest round of conflict, and as many accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity are now in their old age, Boakai's upcoming six-year term as president may be Liberia's last window for meaningful war crimes accountability and justice. The task at the hands of the new president, however, is neither straightforward nor easy.

In the past 20 years, several attempts have been made to try and hold perpetrators of war crimes accountable, with little success. In 2005, following in the footsteps of neighbouring Sierra Leone, which was recovering from its own conflict (a conflict that was very much intertwined with that of Liberia), the Liberian parliament enacted a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Four years later, in 2009, the TRC released its final recommendations, including reparations to victims of the civil wars, reforms to prevent atrocities from reoccurring, the establishment of a special court for war crimes, and the banning of certain implicated individuals from holding office until their names are cleared. The commission's list of persons to be "barred from holding public offices" for "being associated with former warring factions" was extensive and even included then-President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. However, most of TRC's ambitious recommendations, including the suggested political bans on prominent individuals and establishment of a war crimes tribunal, remain unimplemented to this day. Among other factors, this is largely because civil war actors who attained political power after the war have been using their positions to sabotage attempts at accountability and justice within Liberia.

This is why, over the years,

most survivors of the civil war who are looking for judicial justice have had to turn to foreign courts, which have on occasion tried former warlords who settled outside Liberia after the war. In certain cases, these warlords were tried directly for the crimes they committed in Liberia under the principle of universal jurisdiction. In others, they were prosecuted for "immigration fraud" for not declaring their history as a warlord during the immigration process. However, foreign courts managed to try only a small number of individuals to date, and in most cases, survivors of the crimes perpetrated by these individuals who remain in Liberia did not get to follow, and thus meaningfully contribute to and benefit from, these prosecutions. President-elect Boakai, who hails from Lofa, one of the counties most affected by the horrors of the civil war, has promised to end this reliance on foreign courts and bring justice and accountability back home by establishing a special war crimes tribunal in Liberia. Nevertheless, many are now questioning the reliability of this commitment because of Boakai's all-important political alliance with former strongman Prince Yormie Johnson, who is the senator for Liberia's second-most populous county, Nimba. Senator Johnson, whose support helped guarantee Boakai's electoral victory, has always been vocal about his opposition to the establishment of a special war crimes tribunal. The only obstacle in front of the establishment of a tribunal is not Boakai's problematic political alliances, either. In the past 20 years, Liberian authorities did very little to document war crimes, record eyewitness testimonies, and generally preserve evidence about the war. As a result, proving war crimes committed during Liberia's civil wars has become harder and harder over the years. This lack of adequate record-keeping meant that trials of Liberian warlords taking place in other countries had to rely extensively on witness testimony, which made it increasingly difficult to secure convictions.

After so many years, the witnesses to civil war atrocities may find it hard to accurately recall what they have seen and experienced during the war, as evidenced in some foreign trials.

Dounard Bondo & Leshan Kroma

This means if Boakai does not institute a war crimes tribunal now, and ensure that testimony from all living witnesses is securely recorded, Liberia may never get a chance to meaningfully prosecute war crimes committed during its bloody civil wars. While it remains uncertain whether Boakai would be able to hold his campaign promise of establishing a special tribunal, and whether such a tribunal would be successful in convicting perpetrators after all these years, there are other, much more straightforward steps the new president could take to deliver justice to survivors, encourage reconciliation, and increase social harmony. First, he could expand the scope of and increase funding for the few existing community justice and reconciliation mechanisms in the country, such as the Palava Hut Program. This programme, outlined in TRC's final report in 2009, brings victims and perpetrators of lesser war-related crimes - such as arson, assault, forced displacement, forced labour, destruction, theft of properties, and looting - together in a safe space and allows for truth-telling, forgiveness, and reconciliation under the guidance of traditional elders. Currently, the programme visits only a few towns per year and help a very limited number of people. According to the United Nations, until August 2023, Liberia's Palava Hut Program resolved only 277 cases that involved only 500 people inclusive of victims and perpetrators. This is despite the fact that hearings started in 2016. With many perpetrators living alongside victims within communities, the scaling up of the Palava Hut Program could deliver justice and foster forgiveness and reconciliation for lesser crimes of the civil wars at a community level. The non-retributive nature of this community justice mechanism also means that it can help address the issue of crimes committed by child soldiers, who cannot be held fully accountable and punished for the heinous acts they carried out under duress and often under the influence of drugs they were forced to take.

Second, the new government could set up a reparation programme for the victims and survivors of Liberia's civil wars, which could help further societal

reconciliation and healing without burdening the state with hard-to-secure prosecutions. While direct reparations might be impracticable as the entire population was directly or indirectly affected by the war, the government could choose to pay reparations to communities that suffered the worst atrocities in the form of community projects and additional public services, such as therapy. A fund could also be set up to provide direct reparations to victims who are suffering physical challenges due to the abuse they endured during the war. Third, Boakai's government could support foreign courts prosecuting Liberian war criminals in the diaspora, and encourage future prosecutions by providing these courts with any information they may need about suspects on their radar. The government could also help publicise these trials in Liberia, and give the public a chance to follow the proceedings in real time through local media organisations. Fourth, the new government could start meaningfully and systematically documenting the many crimes committed during the wars - not only to acknowledge the suffering of the victims, but also to inform future generations and prevent the repeat of such atrocities. A museum documenting the war and its many horrors - and regional memorial parks in recognition and honour of all those who lost their lives to the conflict - could also be established. These initiatives will not cost too much money or cause significant controversy, but they could engender national healing.

"We have a job ahead of us to do and I'm excited that the citizens have given us approval," Boakai told the media shortly after the results of November's run-off election were announced. "First and foremost, we want to have a message of peace and reconciliation." If Liberia is to truly leave war behind, heal its wounds, and start building itself a prosperous future, the new president has to succeed in delivering that message of "peace and reconciliation". The strongest such message would be the establishment of a special tribunal for war crimes that would finally bring justice back home to Liberia. But if the president, like those before him, finds this to be a complicated task, there are still ways in which he could signal to the people that Liberia is ready for reconciliation, development and sustainable peace.

# Why is Biden engaging in disinformation on Gaza?

**WHEN my wife was pregnant with our first child, she gave me a book about prenatal development. I learned that a baby's lungs are among the last organs to develop - that's why so many premature infants need to be intubated.**

This fact came back to me as I watched the Israeli terror unfold in al-Shifa Hospital, eight weeks ago now. I became fixated on the 39 premature babies there, the ones who were evacuated from the neonatal intensive care unit into two beds, wrapped with foil. I pictured them gasping for breath, slowly dying. Then came the news that five nameless infants were discovered decomposing in Al Nassr Pediatric Hospital, abandoned after the Israeli army forced the medical staff and patients to flee. I pictured how they died alone, cold and in terror.

I cannot doubt that senior officials in the Biden administration have seen the images and videos. I have to believe that many of them are horrified by what they have seen. And I also believe that their awareness of the horror, and their awareness of their active participation in producing it, is, in part, what leads them to fabricate intelligence estimates and tell outright lies. But there is something else at work in the Biden administration's effort to disseminate fake Israeli news: disinformation has been a potent weapon in war and in the commission of genocide. And it has been used frequently, perhaps to diminishing effect in the modern media age. The US government is not very credible when it comes to intelligence.

Recall Secretary of State Colin Powell's cheap performance at the United Nations in 2003, when he accused Iraq of possessing weapons of mass destruction and presented a prop vial containing white powder as evidence.

But in matters of war, a crummy presentation and half-hearted delivery is sometimes good enough. Powell's antics didn't fool anyone, but his presentation

Ahmed Moor

was enough to distract from the impending catastrophe. We learned over time what we knew all along: there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Saddam Hussein had nothing to do with the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. And the only uranium yellowcake to speak of was baked up by British and American spies. But the lies about Iraq were nothing new; Powell's effort was one memorable example out of a series of disinformation acts

cover breaking news as it happens and government officials are regarded as speaking authoritatively when they do. Deference to the office of the presidency is deeply rooted, and by definition the president's words are newsworthy. That deference, combined with the president's prominence as a source of news, means that presidential lies aren't confronted directly even as they are broadcast widely. If the untruths are subsequently challenged, the challenges are not treated as newsworthy.

***They claimed to have seen independent intelligence indicating the presence of a Hamas military installation underneath al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza. Biden, speaking with reporters, has said, "The first war crime is being committed by Hamas by having their headquarters, their military, under a hospital."***

designed by the US government to shape public perceptions.

Perhaps the most infamous instance occurred in 1964, in the Gulf of Tonkin, off the coast of Vietnam. Back then the US fabricated a story about a firefight with North Vietnamese forces there. The goal was to push an escalation of that war domestically. It worked, and millions of Vietnamese civilians were killed in a conflict without a purpose. Today, President Joe Biden and his advisers are plainly lying to us. They claimed to have seen independent intelligence indicating the presence of a Hamas military installation underneath al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza. Biden, speaking with reporters, has said, "The first war crime is being committed by Hamas by having their headquarters, their military, under a hospital. That's a fact. That's what's happened." Only, of course, it didn't.

Many did not believe the president, but again, that's beside the point. Misinformation serves a useful purpose from the point of view of the people who practise it. Propaganda muddies perceptions of what is happening. Our media feel compelled to

By sowing confusion and misinformation, the president diminishes the potency of an electorate's understanding of and forceful opposition to violence. In that way, disinformation is used to untether policymaking from the ordinary accountability mechanisms of democracy. But there are early signs that disinformation doesn't operate in the way it used to. Today, the speed of the news cycle is such that the first lie has barely been uttered before the next lie has been debunked.

Al-Shifa was on our minds, even as Israeli leaders attempted to lay the groundwork for further atrocities in Khan Younis and Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip. Now, they have destroyed nearly all of Gaza's 36 hospitals, and Al-Shifa and Al Nassr Pediatric Hospital continue to be on our minds. And now, as the world turns to South Africa's credible charge of genocide targeting Israel, the White House has chosen to release new "intelligence" doubling down on their original falsehood at al-Shifa. To what purpose isn't clear, but the timing suggests the tired playbook is still at work.

Aljazeera

# Putin may be about to launch an apocalyptic assault

**WITH Western attention turning towards elections in Britain and America, the war in Ukraine is drifting away from the front pages. While many in the West have written the conflict off as a stalemate, the Kremlin has not. There are now rumblings in Moscow that a decisive offensive to turn the tides of the war squarely in Russia's favour may soon be underway.**

Russia is scouring the globe for drones and ammunition from every dictator and rogue state, while Kyiv scratches around and begs for artillery shells and air defence missiles from its distracted "allies". As German Chancellor Shulz urges the European Union to do more - while notably failing to deliver the hundreds of Leopard 2 tanks Ukraine so desperately needs - Russia is moving to a total war footing, with its government spending and economy increasingly dictated by the needs of the war machine. The contrast

between East and West could not be clearer; Russia is focused, and we are not.

Putin, meanwhile, may soon need to show gains on the ground. The election in March will be a complete sham, with his only genuine opposition, Alexei Navalny, safely locked away. That does not mean that the autocrat is entirely ironclad. The memory of last summer's attempted coup will undoubtedly be fresh in his mind, and the civilian deaths caused by Ukrainian assaults across the border will be focusing attention on the state of the war again. Dmitry Peskov, a Kremlin spokesperson has insisted that the Russian military will "do everything in order to minimise the danger at first and then eliminate it entirely." With Russian ultra-Nationalists calling for a major offensive around Kharkiv, there is a clear incentive for Putin to pull out all the stops

Hamish De Bretton-Gordon

in his "special military operation". The problem is that according to the Institute for the Study of War, a US-based think tank, the Russian military is likely unable to "conduct an operation to seize significant territory in Kharkiv Oblast in the near term".

In its words, "A Russian incursion 15 kilometres in depth and several hundred kilometres in width would be a massive operational undertaking that would require a grouping of forces far larger and significantly better resourced than what Russian forces currently have concentrated along the entire international border with Ukraine, least of all in Belgorod Oblast". This does not mean that such an assault is impossible. It simply means that it would require weapons on the battlefield we have yet to see.

In my opinion, the only weapons that Russia has which could achieve this in this time

frame would be a tactical nuclear weapon or some sort of chemical or biological attack. Given the infamous failure of Obama's "red line" in Syria, and the reluctance of the West to fully commit to defending Ukraine, Putin might think this is a gamble worth taking. Like Stalin, Putin has an insatiable ego and a desire for greatness at whatever the cost. Those in the West who believe that a ceasefire could be followed by a return to "normality" are utter fools. Nobody with any understanding of the Kremlin believes that it is a certainty that Putin will stop his westwards march. The drift towards militarisation of the Russian state and the surging calls for a greater offensive must serve as a warning that the West needs to wake up before he acts. We must fully support and arm Ukraine. If we don't, as predicted by the Polish Chief of Security, NATO will be at war with Moscow within a few years.

The Telegraph

# Sunak's best gift for UK would be to call an election

**THE UK is on course for yet more uncertainty in 2024, as Prime Minister Rishi Sunak seems intent on keeping hold of power for as long as he can. The people of the country are yearning for an end to the 14 years of Conservative Party rule, which has oscillated between austerity and Brexit and left many people lamenting its failure to yield any benefits for the country, with the politicians in power seemingly in it for their own benefit rather than putting the country first.**

Sunak's delaying tactics - with the election seemingly set to take place in the autumn rather than in May - demonstrates that he and his party are still deluding themselves that the country will trust them to "finish the job." The only certainty is that the majority of voters are intent on seeing the end of their chaotic rule, which has brought disrepute to politics in the country and shaken the image of Britain abroad. While Tory governments have been busy sloganizing about "taking back control" and launching a new "Global Britain," the signs are that the UK is increasingly unable to control its borders and it lacks the skilled laborers, doctors, nurses, hospitality workers and truck drivers required to deliver on the mantras of the various Conservative governments that made cutting taxes and economic

growth the centerpiece of all their empty promises.

It seems to be a zero-sum game for Britain and the best choice for Sunak might be to end the game now and call for elections in May in the hope that a new page is opened in the government of the UK. The first job would be to clear up the mess left by successive Conservative governments obsessed with austerity and a small state, while adamant about leaving the EU at all costs, including ending freedom of movement. Many would argue that Sunak's decision to delay the general election until the autumn - some think it will be on Nov. 14 instead of May 2 - will not save him from defeat, even with the most ambitious of tax cuts and promises to curb the arrival of small boats across the English Channel and immigration across the board. He may also promise to rejuvenate the National Health Service and ply it with funds to reduce the waiting lists that have ballooned in recent years.

The inevitable is likely to happen, given the 18 to 20-point lead the Labour Party has scored in the polls for the best part of the past year. This is not because it has offered more popular policies, but because of the sense of fatigue and uncertainty felt across the board

and a sense that the years of attrition the Conservatives have caused to the country must stop. Maybe Sunak is still hoping for an economic miracle, with voters noticing an improvement by the end of the summer. As inflation falls and the cost-of-living crisis eases, maybe interest rates will start to show signs of reversing course. Lower interest rates would benefit voters, who would start to feel richer if the cost of the mortgage on their homes started to fall. All this would be in the hope that Sunak could make his election message: The economy is on the right track and therefore no one should vote Labour for fear of ruining it. But as one British commentator has said: "Slogans cannot turn a storm into sunshine."

Whatever Sunak promises in his last few months in power, and even if he applies several tax cuts to bribe parts of the electorate, many believe that the UK's powerful "time for change" tide is likely to sweep away the Conservatives whenever the election is held. This is not because opposition leader Sir Keir Starmer and his shadow Cabinet have the answers to all the ills of the country, but simply because the Conservatives have had their chance and their time has come to an end.

Three in every four Britons want

a change of government, including nearly half of those who voted Tory at the last election in 2019. A YouGov survey published this week gave Starmer's Labour Party a 24 percentage point lead over the Tories. It is expected to win 46 percent of the vote (up 3 percent on the last month) compared to the Conservatives' 22 percent (down 2 percent). Also, when asked who would make the better prime minister, 30 percent backed Starmer and only 18 percent favored Sunak. However, one cannot envy Starmer, who is tipped by most pollsters to win the election, as he and his party will inherit a country that has been torn apart in the last decade. Their best efforts to remedy the country could be insufficient, as there might not be enough money in the treasury to revive the UK's public services, which have been mismanaged for years under the Conservatives.

Unlike his predecessors Liz Truss and Boris Johnson, Sunak could be remembered for showing leadership and doing the right thing for the nation, but only if he calls for a general election to be held as soon as possible. Clinging on to power for the sake of what he believes is "finishing the job" might be honorable in ordinary circumstances, but maybe not this time. Finishing the job or finishing the country, Sunak must make the right choice.

# BRI inspires concerted efforts for global development

**THE Belt and Road, after 10 years of operation, has acquired the status of the ancient Silk Road, raised its brand status, and become one of the biggest protagonists and practitioners of economic globalization.**

The evolution of this Chinese initiative has taught the international community a number of lessons. Among them, two are inspiring as well as revealing. First, the Belt and Road Initiative has prompted a number of global power contenders to take parallel steps to build on similar ideas while raising new concerns in order to promote high-quality development, environmental sustainability and social progress. And second, the initiative has not only been developing and extending its reach; it has also pioneered a leading cooperation mechanism, making modernization a new driver of globalization.

The Belt and Road Initiative has prompted other economies to launch similar initiatives to advance economic development both regionally and globally. For instance, India and Japan announced the "Asia-Africa Growth Corridor" in 2016, the United States, Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development advanced the "Blue Dot Network" in 2019, the G7 member states launched the "Build Back Better World" initiative in 2021 and the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment in 2022 to mobilize \$600 billion for global infrastructure investments by 2027, and the European Union proposed the "Global Gateway" in 2021 to boost smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy and transport sectors and strengthen education, healthcare and research systems across the world. These initiatives are in different stages of development and have different levels of global engagement, in some cases with very limited success, but they all share a common thread: promoting values on a global scale and pushing for globalization. As the

Francisco José Leandro

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said, the Global Gateway will facilitate "smart investments in quality infrastructure, respecting the highest social and environmental standards, in line with the EU's values and standards. The Global Gateway strategy is a template for how Europe can build more resilient connections with the world."

The latest example of such an initiative is the "India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor", which was launched by France, Germany, India, Italy, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the United States and the European Commission at the G20 Summit in New Delhi last year to link Europe, the Middle East and Asia. More important, the Belt and Road Initiative is challenging the monopoly of the West in the postwar world order, as it represents a framework of collaborative practices so as to present quasi-global solutions to common global problems. And at the opening ceremony of the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, China's top leader emphasized that Belt and Road cooperation has developed from physical connectivity to institutional connectivity.

China has laid down the important guiding principles for high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, which include the principle of "planning together, building together, and benefiting together", the philosophy of open, green and clean cooperation, and the pursuit of "high-standard, people-centered and sustainable cooperation".

One of the strongest arguments in favor of the initiative, apart from its size and economic leverage, is its unequivocal contribution to global economic growth, which in turn will help realize the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. All these initiatives are aimed at connecting markets and production centers around the world to ensure the unimpeded flow of goods as well as to raise

social capital. Similarly, all the initiatives are committed to protecting the environment, improving governance and pursuing sustainable growth. But what differentiates the Belt and Road Initiative from non-Chinese driven global initiatives is the fact that the former has been adapting to new challenges by, for example, promoting digitalization, raising product and service quality, transferring technologies, enhancing industrial efficiency, better protecting the environment, safeguarding energy security, and improving governance while also promoting supplementary initiatives such as the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative.

Moreover, the Belt and Road Initiative does not present itself as the only model for realizing modernization and globalization to be copied by the current and potential partners. It rather presents a conglomerate of intertwined viewpoints, seeking joint efforts, promoting people-to-people exchanges, investing in development projects, and making more efforts to create a fairer and equitable global economic order by ending the US dollar's hegemony in global trade. The Belt and Road is a framework initiative, which in conjunction with a number of others and with an innovative global vision seeks market access with consent and promotes globalization as an alternative to the United States-led monopolized economic and trade order. The Belt and Road Initiative has not only prompted other economies to launch similar trade and development initiatives, but also captured the imagination of the majority of the countries, as it advances a framework for cooperation rather than adopting a "buy or leave" attitude.

The Belt and Road is a leading global initiative and a framework for global cooperation, encouraging other global powers to launch similar initiatives, and promote modernization and global economic development based on a shared vision.





## Stocks gain 600 points in intraday trade

ISLAMABAD (INP): Shares at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) returned to trading in the green on Thursday, gaining more than 600 points during intraday trade.

According to the PSX website, the KSE-100 index gained 632.63 points to reach points at 12:54pm, up 0.99 per cent from the previous close of 63,919.84 points. Raza Jafri, head of equities at Intermarket Securities, said that the market had reacted positively to "encouraging data" of healthy remittances and lower T-bill auction yields.

This was coupled with growing positive sentiment

"prompted by corporate events, such as Mari Petroleum hitting its upper circuit after announcing a decent sized gas discovery", he added. Jafri also noted that the IMF Executive Board meeting for the programme's review was also set for later today.

**APP adds:** The Pakistani Rupee on Thursday witnessed an appreciation of 01 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs281.11 against the previous day's closing of Rs281.12.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the

Dollar in the open market stood at Rs280.6 and Rs283.1 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs1.47 to close at Rs308.63 against the last day's closing of Rs307.16, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.93, whereas an increase of Rs1.79 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs358.76 compared to the last closing of Rs356.97.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 01 each to close at

Rs76.53 and Rs74.95 respectively.

**Gold rates up by Rs.200:** The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.200 and was sold at Rs.216,300 on Thursday compared to its sale at Rs.216,100 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs. 171 to Rs. 185,442 from Rs.185,271 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.169,989 from Rs.169,832 the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.2,650 and Rs.2,271.94 respectively.



LARKANA: A vendor displaying various pickles to attract customers at Resham Gali.

## Hamdard Foundation Pakistan organized 2nd Hamdard Naunehal Conference



### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Hamdard Foundation Pakistan organized the 2nd Hamdard Naunehal Conference held online via Zoom (social media platform) on the topic "Be careful, the flow-ers of morals should not wither", presided over by Ms. Sadia Rashid President, Hamdard Foundation Pakistan. Newly elected office bearers of all four Hamdard Naunehal Assemblies participated in the conference. Ms. Sadia Rashid participated in the conference from Hamdard Corporate Head Office. She was accompanied by Director Syed Muhammad Arsalan and the office bearers of Hamdard Naunehal Assembly Karachi. The office bearers from Rawalpindi/Islamabad, Peshawar, and Lahore joined the meeting through Zoom and shared their

thoughts.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Sadia Rashid said that morality holds significant and essential importance in the establishment of a peaceful and progressive society. Advancement on the path of development is unattainable for any nation without the adoption of good morals and attributes. Throughout history, Allah sent prophets in every age to guide and teach humanity moral values. Those who adhere to the teachings of these prophets contribute remarkably to the welfare of society and leave a lasting impact on people's hearts. Among such distinguished personalities is Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said, who occupies a prominent place in our national history. His legacy includes providing mental and intellectual training to the youth, promoting their construc-

tive and creative potential, and setting up a practical path to the realization of the dream of a bright and prosperous Pakistan.

Describing the aims and objectives of the Naunehal Conference, she said that the first Hamdard Naunehal conference was organized in 2023. This choice was influenced by the fact that January marks the birth month of Quaid-e-Naunehal Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said. Therefore, this month was chosen for hosting the Naunehal Conference, aiming to facilitate a meeting of all office-bearers from assemblies in all four centres and through sharing of ideas formulate a strategic plan for the future.

The young speakers Syeda Maryam Fatimah (Hamdard Public School Karachi), Atiya Al Wakil (Divisional Public School Lahore), Rida Nadeem (City English School Rawalpindi), Marwa Gul (Al Faisal Model High School Peshawar) and others said that the Holy

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) emphasized that morals serve as the embellishment of knowledge and worship. On the Day of Resurrection, the actions of a believer will be primarily weighed on the scale, and nothing will hold greater significance than good conduct. When an individual succumbs to their animalistic instincts, it not only robs them of the spiritual vitality derived from a moral existence but also diminishes their intellectual capacity. Ultimately, these worldly passions become dulled, leading to societal decline.

Presently, moral corruption has infiltrated every aspect of our lives, whether in matters of worship, rights and duties, education and training, trust, honesty, sincerity, justice, honouring commitments, duty, or other esteemed values. However, we, the youth, are committed to following the teachings and examples set by visionary Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said. We aim to rectify these shortcomings within our society and aspire to elevate Pakistan to a position of global influence.

Quaid-e-Naunehal Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said stands as a distinguished example of high morals and civility. The institutions he founded for the betterment of the country and its people secured him a prominent position in national history. By attaining notable success through persistent efforts, Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said demonstrated to us that, with unwavering determination and sincerity, one can overcome challenging circumstances and emerge as successful. Adhering to his teachings and ideals provides a pathway to con-

tribute to the development and prosperity of our beloved country. Kindheartedness, goodness, and patriotism were his foundational values. All his life, he strived to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

A patriot by heart, Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said undertook the task of preparing the youth of Pakistan to face future challenges and contribute to shaping the nation's destiny. He dedicated his life to the mission of nation-building through the education and development of young minds. Following in the footsteps of reformers like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who initiated educational reforms for Muslims, Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said also built educational institutes and became Sir Syed's successor. He established schools for children, including those who hail from rural areas.

He established Bazam-e-Naunehal, Hamdard Naunehal Assembly, and the published monthly Hamdard Naunehal magazine.

Additionally, he authored numerous travelogues for children. His practical efforts extended to the establishment of the city of knowledge and wisdom, Madinat al-Hikmah, and throughout his life, he strived and struggled for the promotion of education. At the end of the meeting, Syed Muhammad Arsalan conveyed appreciation for the participation of all attendees.

He expressed the hope that the students would enlighten their peers about the life of the Pakistani martyr, Hakim Mohammed Said, and increase their knowledge base with continuous reading.

## ICCI calls for industrial tariff

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Thursday urged the government to restore the industrial power tariff for the cold storage industry to save it from further trouble.

A delegation of cold storage owners led by Anjuman-e-Wholesale Fruit Commission Agents President Babu Muhammad Aleem and General Secretary Tahar Ayub visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI). They highlighted the issues being faced by the cold storage industry, said a press release issued here today.

Addressing the delegation, Ahsan Zafar Bakh-tawari, President, ICCI said that the cold storage industry was paying electricity bills under the industrial tariff, but the government has imposed a commercial tariff on this industry due to which the amount of their electricity bills has increased manifold giving rise to their cost of doing business.

## 409 connections disconnected

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, disconnecting another 409 connections; Rs 10.7 million fine imposed.

In Lahore, the regional team disconnected 68 connections on illegal use of gas while another 15 on use of compressor and 01 FIR lodged against gas thief.

The team also imposed fine of Rs 0.07 million against gas theft cases. In Rawalpindi & Islamabad the team disconnected 137 connections on illegal use of gas while another 01 on use of compressor and 01 FIR lodged against gas thief.

The amount of Rs 0.7 million have been booked against gas theft cases. In Multan 2 connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas while another 21 on use of compressor.

In Peshawar & Karak, the company disconnected

70 connections on account of direct use of gas while another 02 FIRs lodged against gas thieves and also imposed fine of Rs 2.1 million against gas theft cases.

In Bahawalpur the team disconnected 03 connections on use of compressor.

In Sahiwal, 02 connections were disconnected on compressor use.

In Faisalabad 07 connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas while another 2 on use of compressor. The team also imposed fine of Rs 0.13 million against gas theft cases.

In Sheikhupura 20 connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas and amount of Rs 0.02 million booked against gas theft cases.

In Sargodha, 02 connections were disconnected on compressor use.

In Gujrat the team disconnected 81 connections on illegal use of gas and amount of Rs 7.68 million have been booked against gas theft cases.

## Empowering women can ensure economic growth

LAHORE (INP): Coordinator to Minister of State and Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis on Thursday said that empowering women at grassroots level in Pakistan had great significance for fostering sustainable economic growth.

Addressing a round-table conference on "Impact of Empowering Women in Economic Growth" here, he added that women had a pivotal role to play in the economic and overall development so prioritising their empowerment became

paramount. Kashif Meher was of the view that investing in women's education, healthcare and economic opportunities not only enhanced their well-being but also propelled the nation towards prosperity.

He said economic empowerment involved creating opportunities for women to enter and thrive in various sectors. Micro-finance initiatives, vocational training programmes, and support for women entrepreneurs could boost economic growth by tapping the potential of

women in the workforce, he suggested.

Recognizing and addressing gender-based barriers in the workplace was crucial for fostering an inclusive environment that allowed women to contribute effectively towards strengthening the national economy, he asserted.

The coordinator said that legal reforms and social awareness campaigns could challenge ingrained gender stereotypes, promoting a culture that valued and respected the rights of women.

### Court Notice

In the Court of Abdul Halem Civil Judge V/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Dagar. Case No. 255/1. Institution 11/10/2023. Date of hearing 24/1/2024. Malak Zada VS Eshrat. Notice to No. 3. Mohamad Zada. 4. Sher Zada sons of Etibar Gul. 6 Ghambar Ali Khan. 7. Abdur Rehman. 8. Naser Ahmed Khan. 9. Mian Shazeb.10. Amer Bahadur sons of Jamal Khan. 11. Waqar Ali s/o Dilawar Khan. 12. Shawazir s/o Malook. 13. Mst Hadia alias Marchakay d/o Malook. 19. Wazir Ali. 20. Sahib Ali sons of Totianosh. 21. Amersaid. 22. sons of Safdar. 23. Mst Pazeron widow of Khan. 24. Mohmad Tariq Husain sons of Khan Gul. 26. Mst Parveen Kusar 27. Musarat Kusar. 28. Rasheda Kusar. 29. Tahira Kusar. 30. Rabia Kusar daughters of Khan Gul. 3. Sher Afzal Khan s/o Mian Jan. 32. Mohmad Zaren s/o Khir Mohamad. 33. Mohmad Idres s/o Mohamad Zeb. 42. Tariq Aziz. 43. Ekhtyar Ali. 44. Tariq Aziz. 45. Nazer Khan s/o Arshulla Khan. 46. Ajon Khan s/o Ghafor Khan. 47. Shafisal Khan s/o Said Rehab. 61/1. Fazl Azam. 61/2. Fazal Hakim. 63. Nasebzar s/o Mianzar residents of Ghundaky Tehsil Daggar District Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants cannot be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 9 a.m dated 24/1/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

### Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity reported at the Port where three ships namely, Kyprisia, X-Press Bardsey and Kang Hong carrying Containers and Coal,berthed at Container Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Wednesday. Meanwhile a containership 'APL South-Hampton' also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on (today) Thursday.

A total of eleven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, Maersk Detroit, X-Press Bardsey, MSC Desiree and Al-Saad are left the port on today (Morning) January 10th and three more ships, Curacao, Blue Bird and Kyprisia are expected to sail on same day.

A cargo volume of 221,483 tonnes, comprising 156,177 tonnes imports cargo and 65,306 tonnes export cargo carried in 5,463 Containers (2,013 TEUs Imports and 3,450 TEUs Exports) was handled at the port during last 24 hours There are 04 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them a containership 'APL South-Hampton' is expected to take berths at QICT on today, while another containership ship 'Big Breezy' is due to arrive at Port Qasim on Friday.

### Lost & Found

I have lost original membership of DHA having # 1058RES somewhere. If anyone finds please return it to Ali Akbar Afridi S/o Fazal Manan Afridi CNIC# 1730115846567 Contact # 03339323103.

## FFC hosts 1st Physical SAP User Group Pakistan event

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC) proudly hosted the inaugural Physical SAP User Group Pakistan (SUGPK) event at its Head Office in Rawalpindi. It was graced by Country Managing Director SAP Pakistan, his dedicated team, and Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and Chief Technology Officers (CITOs) from over 22 distinguished

government and private organizations.

The event served as a groundbreaking platform for SAP professionals across diverse sectors to converge, exchange valuable insights, and stay abreast with the latest developments in SAP technology. Renowned speakers and industry experts attended the event, delving into best practices, success stories, and strategies to harness SAP for business growth.

FFC MD&CEO, Mr. Sarfaraz Ahmed Rehman, CIO FFC & Chairman SUGPK North Chapter, Mr. Fakhar Ul Hassan and the Country Managing Director SAP Pakistan, Mr. Saqib Ahmed, shared valuable insights during the session and expressed their delight on culmination of successful 1st Physical SUGPK event that undoubtedly has set a promising precedent for future gatherings, reaffirming FFC's commitment to



foster innovation and collaboration within the SAP community

## IBA launches fact-checking initiative ahead of polls

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Center of Excellence in Journalism (CEJ) at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi has launched a non-partisan fact-checking initiative, iVerify, to advance the scope of independent and unbiased reporting in the country's journalistic landscape.

Addressing the iVerify launch ceremony at Serena Hotel, Islamabad, Amber Rahim Shamsi, Director CEJ-IBA, said that the tool would prove to be an important step in ensuring transparent and verifiable news reporting and investigation methodologies. She further added that "Seeing the rise of misinformation in both digital and conventional media spaces, the fact-checking mechanism established by iVerify shall become a cornerstone of reliable, non-

partisan journalism in Pakistan."

iVerify currently offers one of the few robust verification approaches for journalists in the country with an emphasis on eliminating bias, authenticating facts, and processing news articles through manual examination. It is internationally accredited by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and has been successfully implemented in several countries around the world.

The tool allows journalists and media professionals to submit their stories via iVerify's portal on the CEJ-IBA website, where their story is gauged through a multi-pronged approach comprising of data-driven and language-based evaluation before being verified for accuracy in terms of factual representation and contextualization.

The launch was followed by a panel discussion by senior media professionals, including Mansoor Ali Khan, Zahrah Mazhar, Farhad Jarrah, Absa Komal, Umer Cheema, and Nizam Salazarai, who dissected the utility of a fact-checking tool in a high-stakes journalism environment. Given the potentially volatile nature of newsrooms during election transmissions anticipated during the incoming general elections, the panel agreed that the tool shall prove to play a critical role in curbing the spread of misinformed news stories and making space for responsible, careful journalism.

The Center of Excellence in Journalism (CEJ) was established in 2014 to raise standards in journalism through training workshops, fellowships, awards, and a grad-



uate programme in journalism. With a network of over four thousand journalists across Pakistan, the Center of Excellence in Journalism (CEJ) provides opportunities to learn, innovate and network due to its unique position at

the cusp of academia and the journalism industry. iVerify's mission is to empower voters with verified and reliable information, fostering a transparent electoral process and a well-informed electorate.

In an era where misin-

formation and disinformation can have profound consequences on trust in the democratic process, or violence, iVerify is dedicated to upholding the principles of accuracy, transparency and integrity in elections.





In brief

Minister meets Zaka Ashraf

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Sports, Youth Affairs and Science and Information Technology Dr. Najeebullah Marwat Thursday visited PCB's headquarters Gaddafi Stadium on Wednesday afternoon and met Chairman of the PCB Management Committee Zaka Ashraf. Chairman PCB Management Committee Zaka Ashraf said: "I had a fruitful meeting with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa minister and the PCB have requested the provincial government for the custody of the historic Arbab Niaz and Hayatabad Cricket Stadiums and other grounds in the region." This initiative will not only help PCB to provide advanced facilities for our cricketers but also contribute to the overall development of cricket in the region, he added.

ICC CEO meets Sri Lanka president

LONDON (BBC): ICC CEO Geoff Allardice has met with Sri Lanka's new sports minister, as well as the country's President Ranil Wickremesinghe, during a brief visit undertaken to gain a better understanding of the political situation in the country as it relates to cricket administration. In November, the ICC imposed a suspension on Sri Lanka Cricket's membership, and subsequently stripped the country of its hosting rights of the Men's Under-19 World Cup. Following his meeting with Allardice, sports minister Harin Fernando posted on X (formerly Twitter) that the pair had had a "constructive discussion and a way forward for SLC". Subsequent to that meeting, Allardice had also met President Wickremesinghe, with whom he is understood to have discussed potential changes to SLC's constitution. Allardice will now report his findings back to the ICC's board, which is due to meet at the end of March, and are likely to have the matter of SLC's membership on their agenda. The ICC's suspension of SLC had officially been predicated on perceived government interference. On November 6, previous sports minister Roshan Ranasinghe had sought to sack the entire SLC board, but another arm of Sri Lanka's government - the judiciary - essentially reversed that decision on the following day, issuing a stay order on the minister's gazette.

Andy named Lions head coach

LONDON (BBC): Andy Farrell has been appointed head coach of the British and Irish Lions for the 2025 tour to Australia. The Englishman, currently coaching Ireland, succeeds Warren Gatland in the role, having served as his assistant for the 2013 and 2017 Lions series. Farrell, 48, has led Ireland to a first series win in New Zealand and a Six Nations Grand Slam since taking charge in 2019. Last month he signed a new Ireland contract that runs until 2027. His role with the Lions will start in December 2024. Farrell said it was an "honour and a privilege" and thanked the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) for allowing him to accept the "prestigious opportunity". "There is a wealth of talent across Britain and Ireland, and I am looking forward to building a team that can deliver the ultimate goal of success in Australia," he said.

# Pakistan eye series win against New Zealand to kick off T20 World Cup preparations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan are set to face New Zealand in a five-match T20I series, with the first match scheduled to be played on Friday at Eden Park in Auckland. This will mark left-arm pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi's first assignment as captain, having taken over the reins from Babar Azam. Fourth-ranked Pakistan last played T20s back in April 2023, when they faced New Zealand at home for a five-match series played in Lahore and Rawalpindi. Wicketkeeper batter Mohammad Rizwan, who has been named Shaheen's vice-captain, was Pakistan's leading run-getter in that series while right-arm pacer Haris Rauf was the most successful bowler. Leg-spinner Usama Mir, pacer Mohammad Abbas Afridi and wicket-keeper batter Haseebullah are the uncapped players in the squad while the returning trio of Sahibzada Farhan, Azam Khan and Aamir Jamal also adds depth to the squad.

Spinner Abrar Ahmed, who was initially part of the squad, has been ruled out owing to an injury he sustained last month during Pakistan's Test tour of Australia. Shaheen Shah Afridi, in the pre-series press conference, the video of which has been shared by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said: "It is a great honour and a proud moment to be captaining Pakistan. We are a good T20 side and that has reflected in our performances the past few years. We have done well in World Cups but have not been able to finish as we wanted. We will focus on getting the results we want in big tournaments. "We have 17 games before the World Cup, which is later this year. We want to make sure we have our combination locked in time for that but we also want to ensure that we have a strong bench, in case of injuries during the tournament. We will be testing our younger talent and rotating the players so

that by the time we play the series in England, we have clarity about our combination." Pakistan's squad for tour of New Zealand: Shaheen Shah Afridi (captain), Mohammad Rizwan (vice-captain, wicket-keeper), Aamir Jamal, Abbas Afridi, Azam Khan (wicket-keeper), Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Haseebullah (wicket-keeper), Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub, Usama Mir and Zaman Khan. **Full schedule:** 1st T20 – 12 January 2024 at Eden Park, Auckland 2nd T20 – 14 January 2024 at Seddon Park, Hamilton 3rd T20 – 17 January 2024 at University Oval, Dunedin 4th T20 – 19 January 2024 at Hagley Oval, Christchurch 5th T20 – 21 January 2024 at Hagley Oval, Christchurch

# Haroon Arshad eager to relish the U19 World Cup challenge

PESHAWAR (APP): Haroon Arshad is ready to relish the ICC U19 World Cup challenge in South Africa and is confident in his ability to do the job for Pakistan U19. He played three one-day games against Sri Lanka U19 in the home series last year. The right-handed batter belongs to Karachi and started his cricket quite early with the support of his father, who himself was an amateur player. Talking to PCB Digital about his upbringing and introduction to cricket he said, "Like every kid, I started playing street cricket but then my father introduced me to proper hard-ball cricket because he too used to play at club level. My parents have always supported me in this journey and they believe that kids should be allowed to excel in their field of interest. My sisters pursued the medical field

and I got into cricket." Haroon progressed through the various age group ranks as he represented Karachi Region U13, Sindh Whites U16, Sindh Blues U19 and Karachi Region Whites U19 on his way to representing Pakistan U19 team. As a right-hand batter, he likes to time his shots and play freely while also boasting an impeccable defence. He also follows Pakistan's star batter Babar Azam because of his sound technique and cracking cover drives. Moreover, he was quick to praise Babar's fluent hundred against New Zealand in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2019. Pakistan U19 assistant batting coach Muhammad Masroor, who has been a witness to Haroon's progress on all age group levels said: "I've seen him since he was a little kid and I was thoroughly impressed by his

mechanics as a batter." He always looked ahead of his time and was eager to learn everything about the game. "It feels great to see him part of the Pakistan U19 team for the World Cup," he added. In the National U16 Cup 2021-22, Haroon impressed with the bat as he accumulated 282 runs at an average of 56 in five games. With his rise to the U19 level in the 2023-24 season, he scored 172 runs in five games at an average of 43. Regarding the preparations for ICC Men's U19 World Cup 2024, Haroon stated, "We have prepared well for this challenge and Mohammad Yousuf has shared his knowledge of the South African conditions with us during the camp. We have tried to emulate those conditions in training sessions too. Hopefully, the results will be in our favour as we enter the tournament."

# World number two cards superb 62 to lead Dubai Invitational

DUBAI (BBC): Rory McIlroy began his 2024 season in superb fashion as he carded a bogey-free 62 to set the early pace at the inaugural Dubai Invitational. World number two McIlroy hit nine birdies to lead on nine under, two clear of Germany's Yannik Paul. England's Tommy Fleetwood finished with a birdie to card a bogey-free five-under 66. Nicolai Hojgaard, McIlroy and Fleetwood's European Ryder Cup teammate, is five back after a 67. Starting on the 10th hole at Dubai Creek Resort, McIlroy picked up two birdies in his opening six holes before reeling off five in six from the 17th to the fourth. The four-time major

winner closed out his round with further birdies at the seventh and ninth. Speaking to Sky Sports after his round, McIlroy said "I surprised myself a little bit" with how well he played. "I didn't expect that," said McIlroy. "It didn't feel quite as good as that the first couple of days when I was here hitting balls and playing the course but it was nice to get a card in the hand again and feel the competitive juices flowing. "I surprised myself a little bit but hopefully more of the same over the next few days." The five-time Race to Dubai winner added: "These pro-ams, I'm usually playing with my dad or this week with the tournament host, so there's maybe

a bit of added pressure. "But it's an easy week to get back into things and this is a nice week to do some extra practice so that I feel ready, not just for next week, which is obviously a bigger event [the Dubai Desert Classic], but going into the bulk of the season." The Dubai Invitational consists of 60 professionals and 60 amateurs. The 72-hole individual strokeplay tournament is played currently with a 54-hole pro-am team event, which runs from Thursday to Saturday. There is no cut in the 72-hole pro event. McIlroy, who is playing for the first time since November, will remain in the Middle East next week to defend his Dubai Desert Classic title.

# Man Utd winger returns to Borussia Dortmund on loan

MANCHESTER (Agencies): Jadon Sancho: Manchester United and England winger Jadon Sancho has rejoined former club Borussia Dortmund on loan for the rest of the 2023-24 season. The 23-year-old moved to Old Trafford in a £73m deal from German club Dortmund in July 2021. He has not played for United since 26 August after falling out with manager Erik ten Hag and has been training away from the first team since September. The loan contract contains no option to buy. "When I came into the dressing room today, it felt

like 'coming home'," Sancho said. "I know the club inside and out, I've always been very close with the fans here, and I've never lost contact with those in charge. "I can't wait to see my team-mates again, go out on the pitch, play football with a smile on my face, prepare goals, score goals and help qualify for the Champions League." Sancho is already in Germany having completed a medical on Wednesday, and is expected to join the club's mid-season training camp in Marbella. Dortmund will pay 3.5m

euros (£3m), with up to an additional 4m euros (£3.4m) in add-ons which are subject to appearances, Champions League progress and qualification. The deal covers the majority of Sancho's wages, and if the bonuses are paid in full it would be more than 100% of Sancho's salary to the end of the season. Sancho previously spent four seasons with the Bundesliga club from 2017, scoring 50 goals in 137 appearances. His high-profile move to Old Trafford has seen him struggle for form and consistency, scoring 12 goals in 82 appearances.

# Top seeds Rybakina and Paul crash out in Adelaide

ADELAIDE (AFP/APP): Both top seeds at the ATP-WTA Adelaide International suffered quarter-final shocks on Thursday, with Elena Rybakina and Tommy Paul exiting in straight sets. World number three Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion and last year's Australian Open finalist, was stunned 6-3, 6-3 by Ekaterina Alexandrova, who led 4-0 in both sets. American Paul crashed 6-1, 6-4 to Briton Jack Draper. Russian-born Kazakh Rybakina, who won the Brisbane International last weekend, fell two breaks behind in the opening set and did not win a game until 24 minutes into the match. She rallied in vain, losing the first set and trailing 5-0 in the second, putting up a late fight before slumping out to her 21st-ranked Russian opponent. "I didn't have many expectations," Alexandrova said. "I tried to play every point. My serve (six aces) was a big help today." Alexandrova will now meet sixth seed Jelena Ostapenko, who survived a wobble in the first set but regained concentration to ease past Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk 7-5, 6-3. "It was a tough match of course," Ostapenko said. "There have been times when I've needed to step into the point and put more pressure on the opponent. I need to go for my shots, even if I miss." One quarter-final was determined without a ball struck when Germany's Laura Siegemund pulled out of her match with



Russia's Daria Kasatkina injured. Kasatkina will play American second seed Jessica Pegula, who struggled to get past veteran qualifier Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-7 (1/7), 7-5, 6-4. "She was hitting so hard, taking the ball early," world number five Pegula said. "I don't know how I stayed in it." American Paul joined men's second seed Nicolas Jarry of Chile on the sidelines at the last event prior to the Australian Open. Jarry lost 6-4, 7-5 to Czech Jiri Lehecka. The 62nd-ranked Draper dominated the match against Paul from the start, running away with the first set and battling in the second to set up a semi-final against Alexander Bublik. Russia's Bublik ousted Italian fourth seed Lorenzo Musetti 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 7-5. Third seed Sebastian Korda pow-

ered into the semi-finals for a second straight year, but needed five match points to set up a last four clash with seventh seed Lehecka. The American, son of 1998 Australian Open winner Petr Korda, finished runner-up at Memorial Drive in 2023, losing to Novak Djokovic. He defeated Christopher O'Connell 6-4, 6-4 to keep his dream alive of going one better this year. "I didn't play badly on the match points, but he really raised his level," said Korda, an Australian Open quarter-finalist last season. At the WTA Hobart International, Belgian top seed Elise Mertens stayed on track with a 7-5, 6-0 win over the Netherlands' Arantxa Rus. She will face Daria Saville for a place in the final after the Australian fought past China's Zhu Lin in three sets.

# Ronnie O'Sullivan defeats Barry Hawkins 6-3 to reach Masters semis

LONDON (BBC): Ronnie O'Sullivan labelled himself "awful" despite beating Barry Hawkins 6-3 to stay on course for a record-extending eighth Masters crown. O'Sullivan rallied from 3-2 down to secure a place in his 15th Masters semi-final at Alexandra Palace. Hawkins started brightly, but O'Sullivan finished stronger and will play Shaun Murphy or Jack Lisowski on Saturday afternoon (13.00 GMT). "I'm lucky to get

through," O'Sullivan told BBC Sport. Masters match schedule, BBC TV coverage and tournament history "I felt bad for Barry, I just dragged him down to my level. It's a funny old game. "I didn't feel any pressure at all to be honest, maybe that's why I played like I did. I think you need that pressure sometimes to get you motivated." O'Sullivan won the opening frame with an 88 break, but Hawkins, twice a beaten Masters finalist,

replied with runs of 74, 56 and 47 to lead 3-2 shortly after the interval. However, the left-hander missed a string of good chances to extend his lead further and O'Sullivan, who has not won the title for seven years, pounced in typical predatory fashion to progress. Fine breaks of 77 and 60 allowed him to close out the match in style as he moved within two wins of the £250,000 first prize. "That's the most awful

standard of snooker," added O'Sullivan. "I just said to Barry at the end: 'Sorry mate.' "I've just got this ability with certain players where if I play bad, then they play even worse. "Some of the other guys will punish me, but I've just had it all through my life." Hawkins was hammered 10-1 by O'Sullivan when the pair met in the 2017 Masters final and he had not beat him since the 2016 World Championship in Sheffield.

# Zaka wants Arbab Niaz Stadium control

LAHORE (APP): Chairman PCB Management Committee (MC) Zaka Ashraf has asked the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government to hand control of the iconic Arbab Niaz Stadium, Peshawar for good of the sport and local cricketers. In a meeting with KP's Caretaker Minister for Sports, Youth Affairs, Science and Information Technology Dr. Najeebullah Marwat at the Gaddafi stadium here on Thursday, he called upon the provincial minister for custody of the historic Arbab Niaz and Hayatabad stadiums and other grounds in the region. Earlier, the Caretaker Minister for Sports visited PCB's headquarters at the Gaddafi Stadium and met Chairman PCB Management Committee Zaka Ashraf. On the fruitful meeting with the provincial sports minister, Zaka Ashraf said the initiative will not only help PCB to provide advanced facilities for the cricketers but also contribute to the overall development of cricket in the region.

# Mitchell McClenaghan named MI Emirates bowling coach

MUMBAI (BBC): Mitchell McClenaghan, a four-time IPL champion with Mumbai Indians, has been appointed bowling coach of MI Emirates, their ILT20 affiliate. It will be McClenaghan's first major role as a coach, having last played professionally in 2021. He represented New Zealand in 48 ODIs and 29 T20Is picking up 82 and 30 wickets respectively. McClenaghan will work under Robin Singh, who has been appointed head coach after he spent the ILT20's first season as MI

Emirates' general manager. Singh, who stepped down as UAE men's coach last year, replaces Shane Bond who has left Mumbai's global network and has taken over at Paarl Royals in the SA20. Ajay Jadeja, who spent the 2023 World Cup as Afghanistan's mentor, has also joined MI Emirates' backroom staff as batting coach. Vinay Kumar (assistant coach) and James Franklin (fielding coach) will continue in their roles from the ILT20's inaugural season. MI Emirates

recently announced that Nicholas Pooran will be their captain this season, joining after a short stint with Durban's Super Giants in the SA20. They will be without Kieron Pollard, who led them to a third-placed finish last season, who has replaced the injured Rashid Khan as MI Cape Town captain. Several other ILT20 franchises have changed their coaches ahead of the 2024 season, which starts on January 19. Johan Botha has replaced Paul Farbrace at Sharjah Warriors, with compatriot JP Duminy due to work as his assistant. Tom Kohler-Cadmore, the English wicketkeeper-batter, replaces Moeen Ali as captain. Elsewhere, Hemang Badani has taken over from Phil Simmons as Dubai Capitals coach. Badani, who has recently worked with the Sunrisers franchises in both the IPL and the SA20, recently coached India Capitals in the Legends League, who like Dubai Capitals are owned by GMR Group.



# 30-player Skills Development Camp to commence from 13 January in Multan

PESHAWAR (APP): A 17-day-long Skills Development Camp for 30 players is set to take place from 13 to 29 January at the Inzamam-ul-Haq High-Performance Centre in Multan. The selected players involve top performers of the Hanif Mohammad Trophy, not part of the President's Trophy, and players from far-flung areas of Larkana, Dera Murad Jamali, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Abbottabad, Bahawalpur and Hyderabad regions. The players include 14 batters, four spinners, nine pacers, and three wicket-keepers. These players have been provided with an opportunity for development and extensive skills enhancement under the watchful eye of a well-qualified coaching staff. The camp will primarily focus on red-ball skills development and fitness training. Head coach NCA, Shahid Anwar: "We are organizing a skills camp considering the top performers from the Hanif Mohammad Trophy and Hanif Mohammad Cup. This camp rewards

the players for their hard work during the 2023-24 domestic season. "We are looking ahead to train players from the newly included regions in this domestic season. Our goal is to nurture these young and talented players into fine products that will eventually raise the standards of our domestic cricket and provide us with quality options going forward." Players: Batters - Afaq Ahmed (Abbottabad Region), Ali Ahsan (Hyderabad Region), Ali Imran (Islamabad Region), Anees Azam (Abbottabad Region), Ashir Mehmood (Sialkot Region), Aun Shehzad (Bahawalpur Region), Basit Ali (DM Jamali Region), Hazrat Wali (Quetta Region), Husnain Shameer (AJK Region), Mohammad Ammar (Bahawalpur Region), Mohammad Ibrahim Snr (Quetta Region), Mohammad Waleed (Sialkot Region), Naveed Malik (AJK Region), Rizwan Mehmood (Hyderabad Region) Spinners - Asad Malik (Hyderabad Region), Ashiq Ali (Karachi Region

Blues), Majid Asghar (Hyderabad Region), Mohammad Umair (Bahawalpur Region) Fast bowlers - Faizan Saleem (AJK Region), Haris Hassan (Islamabad Region), Mohammad Nadeem (Islamabad Region), Mohammad Shahid (DM Jamali Region), Mushtaq Ahmed (Larkana Region), Mustafaa Nasir (Hyderabad Region), Najeebullah Achakzai (Quetta Region), Saqib Khan (Karachi Region Blues), Shayan Khalil (Bahawalpur Region) Wicket-keepers - Hasnain Majid (Bahawalpur Region), Khayam Khan (Abbottabad Region), Saifullah Bangash (Karachi Region Blues) Support Staff - Akram Raza (Head Coach), Ghulam Ali (Assistant Coach), Shabbir Ahmad (Fast bowling Coach), Saleem Elahi (Fielding Coach), Masood Anwar (Spin Bowling Coach), Mohammad Tayab (Physiotherapist), Iftikhar Ahmed (Strength and Conditioning Coach) and Mahmood Mahiuddin (Analyst)





## In brief

### Police arrest nine gamblers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi district police arrested nine gamblers and recovered Rs 40,000 stake money, nine mobile phones, and other items from their possession, said a police spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that Civil Lines police conducted a raid and arrested nine gamblers namely Usman, Waseem, Sheram, Numan, Junaid, Hassan, Adnan, Umar and Suleman, who were allegedly involved in betting while playing cards. Police recovered Rs 40,000, nine mobile phones, and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under process. Superintendent of Police, Potohar said that gambling is the root cause of other evils and those involved in such crimes do not deserve any concession.

### ANF seizes 250 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country managed to recover 250 kg of drugs and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that 637 grams of weed was recovered from a parcel sent from Thailand at the courier office in Rawalpindi while three accused were arrested. In an operation, 128.5 kg hashish and 53.5 kg opium were recovered near Swabi Interchange. 36 kg hashish was recovered from an accused rounded up from Ring Road Peshawar. In the fourth operation, 26.4 kg of hashish was recovered near Sher Shah Toll Plaza Multan and an accused was arrested. In the fifth operation, five kg of hashish was recovered from the Zakhakhel area of Khyber. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.

### Police net 17 lawbreakers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers, bootleggers, illegal weapon holders, and other lawbreakers here on Thursday arrested 17 accused besides recovering over 1240 grams charras, 210 grams heroin, 40 liters liquor, a 222 bore rifle, two 30-bore pistols, ammunition, LPG cylinders and other items from their possession. A police spokesperson said that Rattaamal, Pirwadhai, and Airport police arrested Imtiaz, Rustam, Shayan and a female drug peddler with 1240 grams charras and 210 grams of heroin. Bani, Sadiqabad, Morgah, and Saddar Baroni police netted Ramaish, Atish, Tabasam, and Robert for having 40 liters liquor. Similarly, Saddar Baroni, Civil Lines, and Dhamial police held Mubashir, Wajid, and Saqib for possessing a 222-bore rifle, two 30-bore pistols, and ammunition. The spokesman further informed that Rawalpindi District Police under an ongoing operation against illegal Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and petrol agencies conducted raids and arrested five accused. R.A. Bazar and Bani police rounded up five accused namely Danish, Imran, Hashim, Bahadar Khan and Amir Siddiqui, and confiscated LPG cylinders, and refilling gadgets from their possession. Police registered separate cases against the accused, he added. He said the police would continue their operation against the lawbreakers and the illegal petrol and LPG agencies would be sealed.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah cutting ribbon to inaugurate Calligraphy Exhibition at PNCA.

## Minister advise citizens to maintain a healthy diet, use face masks

ISLAMABAD (APP): Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Health and Population Welfare Dr Jamal Nasir Thursday urged people to remain vigilant while maintaining a healthy diet and using face masks as 'pneumonia cases' were continuously rising due to smog weather.

Talking to a private news channel he pointed out that people with weak immunity due to chronic cardiac, kidney and liver diseases or diabetes could easily contract the respiratory disease in cold weather. Health experts warned of an acute rise in pneumonia cases among

elderly people and children, adding, citizens asked to use plenty of rest, warm beverages, steam baths or the use of humidifiers in houses for air moisture and timely consultations with doctors.

He said that the major cause of increased cases was undiagnosed influenza and pneumonia cases, adding, citizens to immediately consult doctors and receive treatment after having respiratory issues. He confirmed that the number of pneumonia cases was higher than the previous year, adding, a precautionary measure to protect young children

from the harsh cold weather conditions prevailing in the province.

Replying to a question, he said that the Punjab government was cracking down on vehicles emitting smoke, adding, that action would be taken against all factories causing environmental pollution with district administrations closely monitoring all industries and brick kilns.

In addition to the school mask mandate, the public has been urged to use masks as well. Citizens are encouraged to take precautions to safeguard their health in the face of the ongoing smog crisis, he added.

## HEC to hold conferences to seek ideas for tackling climate change challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has decided to hold a series of conferences across the country to seek innovative ideas from Pakistani university graduates to tackle climate change challenges.

According to HEC, on a national scale, Pakistan grapples with significant climate change challenges, including power generation, power distribution, renewable energy, waste dumping points, waste collection points, water treatment, segregation of waste, and the pressing demands of a growing population.

The consequences of these issues are profound, stressing the urgency of a united effort to secure energy, water, eco-tourism, agriculture & forestry and liquid & solid waste management resources and ensure sustainability for present and future generations.

In response to these challenges, the Higher Education

Commission has also established Green Youth Movement (GYM) clubs in 137 public sector universities. These clubs are actively involved in different awareness and climate action research-related activities. In this regard, HEC in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, under its project "Green Youth Movement" has planned a series of conferences on Renewable Energy, Liquid and Solid Waste Management, Water Conservation, Eco-tourism and Agriculture and Forestry.

The first conference on Renewable Energy is scheduled to take place in Lahore and the second conference on liquid and solid waste management is set for Karachi by the end of January 2024.

The call for innovative, creative and workable ideas has been announced for both conferences. The students of the university or graduates of any Pakistani

university from the age bracket 18-29 can apply for the conference. The last date to submit the ideas is 14th January 2024.

The director of the Green Youth Movement Project, Irfan Ullah told APP that Pakistani youth had immense potential to combat climate change by working on innovative projects. HEC, Green Youth Movement is providing a great opportunity for young people to pitch their innovative ideas in the field of Renewable Energy and Liquid and solid Waste Management. He further said, "It's a valuable platform to showcase and celebrate innovative solutions in renewable energy and liquid & waste management."

He said that to ensure the long-term sustainability of these GYM clubs, we were establishing a partnership with the development sector to secure both financial and technical support.

## Islamabad police establish first cyber crime investigation unit to combat digital offenses

ISLAMABAD (APP): The newly inaugurated Cyber Crime Investigation Unit within the Pakistan police department has been officially established as part of Islamabad Police's efforts to strengthen the fight against cybercrimes.

This milestone initiative comes on the heels of amendments to the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), empowering Islamabad Police to register cybercrime cases under Section 30.

Seeking to harness specialized expertise, Islamabad Police have collaborated with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to leverage technical assistance in the investigation of cybercrimes. The partnership is geared towards addressing the intricate challenges posed by cyber threats and ensuring a robust response to the evolving landscape of digital offenses.

The successful completion of the first phase of training for 60 officers from Islamabad Police, in collaboration with the FIA, marks a crucial step in building a skilled workforce proficient in handling cybercrime cases. These officers have undergone specialized training to equip them with the knowledge and tools necessary for effective cybercrime investigations.

To streamline and centralize efforts, the Cyber Crime Investigation Center has been established at the F-6 Service Center. This state-of-the-art facility will serve as a hub for coordinating and conducting in-depth investigations into cybercrimes, providing a dedicated space for experts to analyze and respond to digital offenses.

Operating under the authority of CPO Safe City and the oversight of SSP (Safe City), the officers of the Cyber Crime Investigation Unit will execute their responsibilities with precision, ensuring a thorough and coordinated strategy in addressing cyber threats.

In a citizen-friendly move, individuals are encouraged to approach any police station to request the inclusion of cybercrime cases, fostering community involvement in the fight against digital offenses.

The F-6 Cyber Crime Investigation Center is set to become operational from January 15, further fortifying Islamabad's capabilities in combating cyber threats. The collaborative efforts between Islamabad Police and the FIA underscore a commitment to eliminating emerging forms of criminal activities and safeguarding the digital landscape for the residents of the federal capital.

## Ashrafi debunks misconceptions about non-Muslims' visit to Madina Munawarah

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Special Representative for Religious Harmony and Pakistani Diaspora in the Middle East and Muslim countries, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi on Thursday expressed concerns about the unjustified social media smear campaign against Saudi leadership.

He, in a statement, stressed the need to effectively counter the tactics, aimed at creating emotional confusion and gulf among admirers of Saudi Arabia.

He specifically referred to a controversy, following the visit of Indian delegation, led by Union Minister Smriti Irani, to Madina Munawarah during her two-day official visit to the Kingdom. The purpose of the visit was to sign a bilateral agreement allocating a quota of 175,025 pilgrims for this year's annual Hajj pilgrimage, he added.

Ashrafi, who is also the chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council, referred to a verse from the Holy Quran related to the prohibition of non-Muslims' visit, and clarified that this applied to just Masjid-e-Haram, according to the views of several Ulema and Mashaykh.

He cited religious decrees from Saudi Mufti Azam Ibn Baz and other prominent scholars, affirming that non-Muslims could indeed visit Madina Munawarah.

Emphasizing the historical context, Ashrafi highlighted instances from the era of the second Caliph Hazrat Umar (RA) when non-Muslims visited the Madina for trade purposes.

He also mentioned that even Christians from Najran visited Madina even during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

Ashrafi discussed the two aspects of the visit, considering both Shariah and political dimensions. He asserted that Saudi religious scholars and leaders had a clear stance on the temporary visit of non-Muslims to Madina for specific purposes.

Addressing the political motives behind the visit, he urged critics to refrain from defaming the Saudi leadership, emphasizing that the Saudi government, clerics, and the nation were adhering to Shariah's guidelines in the best interest of the Kingdom. Concluding the remarks, Ashrafi urged those, spreading disinformation, to avoid comments on sensitive issues.

## Regularization brings jubilation as teachers secure permanent positions

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as 227 teachers working in the educational institutions of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) are rejoicing as they transition from daily wage teachers to secure regulated appointments. They have long served temporarily, and now find themselves with the security of a permanent position.

The federal cabinet has approved the regular appointment of 227 daily wage teachers, by a ruling by the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

The move follows a comprehensive summary presented by the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MOFE&PT) and the recommendations of the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC).

An official from the education ministry while talking to APP, emphasized that the IHC had mandated the approval of the matter by the federal cabinet in its verdict. In line with this directive, the MOFE&PT submitted a summary to the federal cabinet in November 2023, seeking regularization for the 227 daily-wage teachers.

## 1143 graduates conferred degrees at 21st convocation of FJWU

RAWALPINDI (APP): The 21st convocation of Fatima Jinnah Women's University (FJWU) was held here on Thursday to commemorate the outstanding academic accomplishments of 1143 graduates of 2023.

Governor Punjab and Chancellor FJWU Engr. Mohammad Baligh Ur Rehman was the chief guest at the convocation. Addressing the participants, Engr. Mohammad Baligh Ur Rehman expressed immense pride and gratitude, recognizing the hard work, determination, and transformative experiences that defined their academic journey.

He lauded the 1143 graduates for their outstanding achievements, underscoring the crucial role of education in shaping responsible citizens for Pakistan's future.

Emphasizing the challenges posed by technological advancements, particularly Artificial Intelligence, the Chancellor urged the students to be prepared and informed, acknowledging the significant role of higher education in cultivating well-informed and cultured citizens.

Furthermore, the Chancellor highlighted the significance of collaboration, resilience, and empathy, which the graduates imbibed during their tenure at FJWU. He underscored the importance of these qualities in navigating future challenges and opportunities and emphasized that education is a lifelong journey, and graduates are equipped with the necessary skills for continual adaptation in a rapidly evolving world.

Additionally, the Chancellor commended the faculty's academic contributions, with FJWU achieving remarkable milestones in research and international rankings.

He expressed pride in the university's accomplishments, ranking among the world's top 50 universities in several categories and achieving high marks in various prestigious rank-

ings. The Chancellor praised the faculty's dedication, acknowledging their role as role models and the driving force behind FJWU's academic eminence. The Governor also reiterated the Punjab government's commitment to supporting FJWU's growth and development, ensuring financial assistance for the upcoming fiscal year.

He applauded the university's progress under the dynamic leadership of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Uzaira Rafique and recognized the legacy of former Vice Chancellors, affirming confidence in FJWU's continued success in imparting quality education and innovation.

The Vice-Chancellor, (VC) of FJWU, Prof. Dr. Uzaira Rafique announced the graduation of 1143 students, comprising 18 PhD, 155 MPhil, 08 Masters, and 962 Bachelor students. She emphasized the instrumental role played by the parents, relatives, and friends in supporting and nurturing the graduates, highlighting their collective success and the institution's academic achievements.

Underlining the significant institutional strides, Dr. Uzaira highlighted FJWU's trans-formative journey over 25 years of academic excellence.

The university expanded its academic repertoire to accommodate 7265 students in 80-degree programs, inaugurating three new institutes and additional departments. These initiatives epitomize FJWU's dedication to offering diverse academic pathways to its students, fostering an environment of academic expression and innovation. Furthermore, the VC spotlighted FJWU's noteworthy international rankings in the prestigious Times Higher Education Impact Ranking of 2023 and QS Asia University Ranking 2024, where FJWU has achieved the distinction of being the only Pakistani University to make it to the top 50 international

universities. Moreover, in the UI Green Metric World University Ranking of 2023, FJWU secured a Top Women University position in the category of Education & Research in Pakistan, 11th position among the Top 50 in the World University Real Impact 2023 Ranking. She also commended the institution's commitment to societal impact, practical education, and inclusive practices, exemplified by the diverse academic and administrative staff. Dr. Uzaira celebrated the graduation of Ms. Nazli Alam at 58, symbolizing FJWU's commitment to providing education without age boundaries and ensuring inclusivity.

In addition to celebrating academic accomplishments, the VC highlighted the university's milestones, including successful student-led start-up incubations, hosting international conferences, numerous MoUs signed, and active participation in projects aimed at elevating Pakistan's higher education system.

She expressed her gratitude to the former Vice Chancellors by mentioning "I extend a special tribute to my predecessors, the former Vice Chancellors, for their instrumental role in laying the foundation, nurturing growth, and achieving excellence in academia. Being an integral part of FJWU from its inception, my journey has traversed through all three phases, culminating in a more challenging yet pivotal position". Dr. Uzaira Rafique concluded by expressing gratitude to the Governor Punjab Engr. Mohammad Baligh Ur Rehman for his unwavering support and guidance, reiterating FJWU's commitment to furthering its global advancements under his stewardship. The ceremony saw a momentous celebration honoring the illustrious graduating class of 2023 and acknowledged by distinguished HEC Representatives, Syndicate members, Vice Chancellors, Parents, and esteemed dignitaries.



RAWALPINDI: A vendor selling mobile accessories at Commercial Market.



#### Earthquake felt in Kabul

KABUL (TOLOnews): Residents in several provinces of Afghanistan including the capital, Kabul, said that an earthquake shook their areas on Thursday. The earthquake hit with a 6.4 magnitude and its epicenter was 44 km SSW of Jurm district in the northern province of Badakshan. This comes as in October last year a heavy earthquake and aftershocks in Herat province killed over 2,500 and injured more than 2,000 and damaged thousands of homes either partially or completely.

## The Frontier Post

Jamadi-us-Sanni 29, 1445 — Friday, January 12, 2024

#### Healthcare services provided

KABUL (BNA): Over the past month, the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) provided health services to 9,156 people in Farah province via its main health facility and two mobile health teams. According to the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) office, these services include wound dressing, children's vaccination, health consultations, maternal health care during and after childbirth, and addressing child malnutrition.

## Explosion hits near Mosque in Kabul

KABUL (Khaama Press): Reports indicate that there was an explosion near the Abu Muslim Khorasani Mosque in Kabul's Khair Khana area on Thursday morning.

The explosion took place around 7 AM this Thursday near the Abu Muslim Khorasani Mosque located in the Khair Khana area.

According to the report, there is no information

available regarding the nature and potential casualties of this explosion at the moment.

This news comes just two days after Afghan media reported an explosion in the eastern part of Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, resulting in 3 deaths and 4 injuries.

On Wednesday, the ISIS group, also called Daesh claimed responsibility for

this explosion in the capital of Afghanistan.

This marks the second attack in a week in the city of Kabul for which ISIS has claimed responsibility.

Since the Taliban took control of the country, their main challenge has been ensuring security, as incidents like explosions, targeted killings, and acts of terror have been reported in various parts of the country.

## Nuristan forest fire still spreading

ASDABAD (Pajhwok): A fire that broke out three days ago in a forest area in eastern Nuristan province has been controlled, an official said, but residents say the fire is still spreading.

Nuristan agriculture and livestock director Salman Aiman told Pajhwok the fire in Norgram district was doused in cooperation with the provincial administration and the people.

Also, the police headquarters said police personnel had reached the scene and the fire had now been completely controlled.

But local residents said the fire was still spreading.

A tribal elder, Inayat Rahman, told Pajhwok: "The fire in Mashpi forests gutted about 35 kilometers of forest. Some pedestrians had lit up a fire to warm themselves, but they did not put out the fire while leaving and the fire then spread in the forest".

Another resident, Khial Mohammad, said many people had reached the area during the past two days and were busy extinguishing the blaze.

He feared the fire could spread to other areas if the government did not control it.

Similar fires had broken out before in the forests of Nuristan and Kunar provinces due to various factors, gutting large swathes of forests and pastures.

## New business inaugurated

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Ministry of Transportation and Civil Aviation inaugurated a lounge area for traders at the Kabul International Airport.

The construction of a new gate of Kabul Airport, costing \$50,000, by a private company has begun. The construction is due to be completed within the next 6 months.

The deputy Minister of Transportation and Civil Aviation in finance and administrative affairs, Sediqullah, called on the traders to help the ministry in improvement of facilities and design of the airports in Afghanistan.

## Spokespersons represent IEA, says Haqqani

KABUL (Ariana News): The Islamic Emirate's Acting Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani has asked the spokespersons of government departments to ensure information is made available to the media on time.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of a seminar on improving the capacity of the spokespersons of the provinces and police headquarters in Kabul, Haqqani said that the spokespersons represent the IEA and should not impose their own thoughts and words on others.

Addressing the spokespersons, he added that they should refrain from raising controversial issues and emphasized that pens and talents should be used for national unity and positive reforms.



He asked the media not to be influenced and to convey the true image of the country to the people and to prevent rumors with accurate reporting so as not to create concerns for

the people. Sirajuddin Haqqani asked the government spokespersons to cooperate with media outlets.

The acting interior minister stated that peo-

ple's privacy should not be harmed in the reporting process and journalists are obliged to carry out their work based on the accepted principles of journalism.

## Officials speak regularly but UK 'some way off' recognizing IEA

KABUL (Ariana News): Britain's foreign office minister of state, Andrew Mitchell, said the UK is "some way off" moving to recognise the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan although officials from both sides speak regularly.

Responding to calls from former minister Tobias Ellwood for the UK to re-engage with the IEA and reopen the Kabul embassy, Mitchell said the UK government has a "pragmatic dialogue" with the IEA but needs to "keep the pressure on them to change their approach".

He also said the government will keep "very much under review" calls to reopen the UK embassy in Afghanistan, but he noted the security and political

situation does not currently allow them to re-establish a diplomatic presence in Kabul.

Speaking in Westminster Hall, Mitchell said the IEA's "increasingly repressive" policies have had a "devastating impact" on women and girls in Afghanistan while minority groups face "discrimination and attacks".

He said the basic expectations, as made clear by UN resolutions, include ensuring Afghanistan will "no longer be used as a base for terrorist activities".

Mitchell told MPs: "Our senior officials speak regularly to the Taliban (IEA), including to secure the release of four British national detainees last October.

"Officials also visit Kabul when the situation permits, including a visit last month from the British charge d'affaires to Kabul, where he met a wide range of senior Taliban figures.

"Regardless of the complexities of the relationship, the UK government has helped lead the way in securing the Afghan people. "In respect of (Mr Ellwood's) plea about the embassy, we will note what he has said and keep that very much under review."

Mitchell also said the UK has dispersed more than £600 million since 2021 in aid for Afghanistan.

Mitchell added: "Our intention since August 2021 has been to re-establish a diplomatic presence in

Kabul when the security and political situation allows. We do not believe that is the case at the moment but officials continue to visit and we'll keep this under close review.

"We're clear that we must have a pragmatic dialogue with the Taliban (IEA) however this does not amount to recognition. We are some way off moving to recognise the Taliban and we need to keep the pressure on them to change their approach.

"This does not stop us from having an impact on the ground and directly helping the people of Afghanistan in any pragmatic way."

The IEA has not yet commented on Mitchell's address to British MPs.

## Health centers to be constructed according to agreed standards

KABUL (BNA): During a meeting with representatives from the United Nations Population Fund and the International Organization for Migration in Afghanistan, the Deputy Minister of Public Health underlined the importance of adhering to agreed-upon standards for constructing family health houses.

Dr. Mohammad Hassan Ghiasi, Deputy of the Public Health Ministry, met with representatives of the United Nations Population Fund and the International Organization for Migration in Afghanistan to discuss the construction of family health facilities with financial support from both organizations in Helmand



Province.

The Deputy of the Public Health Ministry thanked health partners for their collaboration and stressed the

necessity of building health centers by established standards.

The representatives of these institutions have

expressed their commitment to working in coordination with the Ministry of Public Health of the Islamic Emirate.

## Herat women turn to homemade products amid unemployment

HERAT (Khaama Press): In the last two years, restrictions in Afghanistan have pushed many women with tight budgets to start making homemade pastries at home to help with their family's finances.

A woman from Herat, who preferred not to reveal her name, shared with Khama Press that she had been searching for work for three years with no success. The challenging economic situation and her family's indebtedness forced her to prepare and sell homemade sweets on a tight budget.

At age twenty, she has been married for a year, and her husband has consistently supported her. After receiving orders, her husband delivers the sweets.

She added, "If, in these circumstances, I can support myself and my family, I am happy. I receive daily orders for ten to fifteen boxes of homemade cookies and I want to expand my business to support other girls, because, as she puts it, 'At the very least, if I don't become a good

cook, I want to be a good sweet chef."

Another woman in western Kabul is also engaged in a similar endeavour to support her family and children. She told Khaama Press, "It doesn't matter who imposes new restrictions or obstacles to women's work; we are responsible for our families, so we must find a way to support our families."

After the Taliban took control in Afghanistan,

they banned women from going to school or working. As a result, hundreds of women have lost their jobs and are now struggling financially.

It's worth noting that recent survey results from the Al-Biruni Institute, which has just been published, show that the level of family debt in Afghanistan increased by 67 per cent in 2023 compared to 2021.

According to this report,

the ceiling for male unemployment has risen to 31 per cent, and female unemployment to 8 per cent in Afghanistan.

Despite continued restrictions on women and girls in Afghanistan, many have turned to online education, sewing and painting courses, establishing online shops and restaurants, and producing homemade products as a way to adapt and support themselves and their families.



## UN appointing new envoy will be a failed experience



KABUL (Ariana News): Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the leader of Hizb-e-Islami, has said the appointment of a new special representative by the United Nations for Afghanistan will be a repeat of a failed experience, because past experiences show that the organization has neither a practical plan nor the resources to solve the Afghanistan crisis.

"The experiences of the past have repeatedly shown that the United Nations, with its existing structure, has neither the ability nor the resources to solve the issue of Afghanistan and similar issues," Hekmatyar said in a virtual meeting with his party members.

The leader of Hizb-e-Islami believes that the only solution to the Afghan crisis is the holding of a Loya Jirga, the formation of an inclusive government,

and intra-Afghan negotiations without the presence of foreigners.

"Negotiate with a sense of responsibility towards God and the people and without mediation and any open or non-open presence of foreigners," he said.

Experts also believe that in the past, the work of UN representatives did not lead to permanent peace and stability in Afghanistan, but representatives are needed to establish relations between Kabul and the international community.

"The United Nations special representative cannot do miracles, and it is true that the work of the United Nations special representatives in Afghanistan has not led to peace, but the resolution has been approved by the Security Council, with abstentions from China and Russia. So now the representative is

appointed and the way to interact and get the recognition of Afghanistan has been determined through this representative," Tariq Farhadi, an expert on political affairs, said.

About two weeks ago, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution requesting the appointment of a special envoy for Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Emirate expressed its displeasure with the approval of this resolution.

The ministry said that appointing another representative for Afghanistan in the existence of the United Nations Special Mission (UNAMA) is considered unnecessary because Afghanistan is not a country at war and now there is a central government ruling which has preserved the interests of the country.

## Turgundi-Herat, Andkhoy-Mazar railway projects to complete soon

KABUL (BNA): The Economic Commission of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has resolved to finalize the railway projects from Torgundi to Herat and from Andkhoy to Mazar-i-Sharif, the capital city of Balkh province.

As per the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, the commission, under the leadership of Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhand,

instructed the Afghan Railway Authority to expedite the completion of these railway networks.

In addition, the authority has been tasked with devising a comprehensive plan, inclusive of proposals, for the construction of a railway line from Herat to Spin Boldak in Kandahar province.

The successful completion of these networks is

anticipated to enhance trade and transit between Afghanistan and Central Asian countries, thereby providing significant facilitation.

The meeting also concluded with the decision to establish a secretariat for the TAP project under the Ministry of Water and Energy, which will supervise the technical and legal aspects of the project.

Moreover, the activities of the Ministry of Finance concerning the approval of guarantees, supplies, and outstanding claims for companies contracted during the pre-Islamic Emirate government era were ratified.

The Economic Commission also approved the guidelines for the humane slaughtering of chickens, as proposed by the Afghan Academy of Sciences.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock has been mandated to enforce these guidelines diligently.

Furthermore, the contract for the installation of GPS devices in transit vehicles was granted to Afghan Post by the Economic Commission.

The company is expected to present its report on this matter within a month. As per the contract, Afghan Post will install a GPS device on each transit vehicle for a charge of \$41.



## Drought-hit Uruzgan farmers demand dam's construction

TIRINKOT (Pajhwok): A number of farmers in central Uruzgan province are concerned about the ongoing drought and ask the government to construct the Agha Jan dam in Chinatu district of the province.

Ismatullah, a farmer in Tirinkot, told Pajhwok Afghan News he planted wheat on one and a half acres of land, but he was worried if did not rain, he would harvest nothing.

Wali Mohammad, another farmer in Chori district,

also mentioned the same problem and hoped they would get yield from wheat.

He said: "I have sown wheat, but I do not expect it to give yield due to lack of rain and the rivers have also dried up."

He added the underground water level had also decreased due to the drought and increasing number of deep wells.

He feared if the government did not address the problem of irrigation water, hundreds of acres of agri-

cultural land would be ruined in the district.

Meanwhile, some residents asked the government to construct the Agha Jan dam in the province.

Sher Mohammad, a farmer, said the dam was vital for the residents of the province, especially farmers.

He said if the dam was constructed, it would solve the problem of water scarcity.

On the other hand, Maulvi Abdul Manan Farooqi, spokesman for

Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock Department, said that if the current dry spell continued, seventy percent of crops grown in the province would not give yield.

He said the Agha Jan dam's construction could resolve the problems of farmers. He said one check dam each would be constructed in six districts of the province.

He added construction work on six check dams had been launched in six districts of the province.



# Govt bound to meet ECP requirements: Solangi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Thursday that the caretaker government was constitutionally bound to meet the financial, administrative and security requirements of the Election Commission of Pakistan.

Talking to the media outside the ECP, he said that God willing, the elections will be held in the country on Thursday, February 8, 2024. He said under the constitution, the ECP had the responsibility to hold free, fair and transparent elections in the country.

The caretaker government was constitutional and legal, Murtaza Solangi added and it stood behind the Election Commission. The minister said that security issues were real, and the government was aware of them and it will improve the security situation. To a question, he said only PTI can tell better about PTI-related matters. He said that there was no ban on raising questions in the country.

**Govt resolute in commitment to combat terrorism on soil of Pakistan:** Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said that the government was resolute in its commitment to combat terrorism on the soil of this country.

He was delivering his speech as chief guest at the launching ceremony of the Annual Security Assessment Report by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS). "On behalf of the federal government, let me assure you that we are constantly working to address the issue of terrorism through various hard and soft measures", he said.

He said that Pakistan had repeatedly asked interim Afghan government to address Pakistan's counter-terrorism concerns, especially the space available to militant groups like TTP to operate in and from Afghanistan. "Pakistan expects a positive response from the Afghan government. Pakistan has also raised the issue of access to modern weapons in Afghanistan to these militant groups besides involvement of Afghan nationals in anti-state violence in Pakistan", he said adding without addressing the issue of terrorism, both countries could not embark on the journey of economic growth and development.

Murtaza Solangi said on Thursday that there would be no negotiations with armed terrorist groups. "There will be no talks with terrorists as long as they are armed and do not accept the constitution of Pakistan", Murtaza

Solangi said categorically. He said that JUI Chief Maulana Fazl ur Rehman's visit to Afghanistan was unofficial.

In a statement, he said that before leaving for his visit, Fazl ur Rehman took a briefing from various institutions. "If any politician wants to play a constructive role for the improvement of relations between the two countries, we have no objection", Murtaza Solangi said. The minister said that government will use the insights from this report to refine its strategies and ensure the safety and security of our citizens. He applauded the dedicated team of researchers at PICSS for its tireless efforts for producing a comprehensive and insightful security report.

"Your commitment to understanding and addressing complex security challenges is commendable, and your work forms the backbone of informed policy decisions", he maintained. The minister said that in today's dynamic world, data-driven reports were the cornerstone of informed decision-making and PICSS had set an exemplary standard in this regard. He opined that such reports not only provide a comprehensive understanding of the security landscape but also serve as a roadmap for policymakers. The invaluable insights derived from data are crucial for developing effective strategies to safeguard our nation.

Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) is not a new name in media and it is quite encouraging to note today that it is equally popular among the diplomatic community. The minister said that PICSS made valuable contributions for society by conducting various research studies.

He said that PICSS's country-wide campaign "Pakistaniat" to engage youth has touched his heart as this was an excellent approach to safeguard our youth from falling prey to extremist ideologies.

He said, he was glad to note that PICSS applied data driven approach and provides objective analysis of security and conflict-related developments in Pakistan and the immediate neighbourhood. The minister said, he was also happy to note that PICSS had developed a database of anti-state violence in Pakistan since 2001 and now has expanded it to the whole of South Asia including Afghanistan.

This can be beneficial for researchers to conduct research on various issues of militancy besides allowing PICSS researchers to conduct research and prepare weekly, monthly and annual reports like the one being formally launched today.

Stressing the need for a more robust engagement between governments and think tanks, he said that such events underscore the importance of fostering collaborative environments.

"It is through such partnerships that we can bridge the gap between theory and practical, implementable solutions." The minister said that PICSS Annual Security Assessment Report 2023 was an outcome of thorough research which presented data in a very easy-to-understand format. Emphasizing the pivotal role media organizations play in shaping public opinion and awareness, Solangi said that building strong liaisons between media and think tanks, like PICSS was crucial. Such partnerships will provide the media with a deeper understanding of the intricacies of the security landscape, enabling them to disseminate accurate and well-informed news, he opined.

He said PICSS self-sustaining financial model to generate funds for its operations was a role model for other institutes and think tanks as this provided enough space to operate independently and without any influence. Think tanks should be independent from any influence to conduct unbiased research and analyses for greater good of the society, he said and added that he was confident that think tanks like PICSS will continue to provide research-based advice for the policy makers to deal with various conflict and security related issues that plague our country and society.

Meanwhile, Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said that major political parties would have to give vision for the economic future of the country.

Delivering his speech at the seminar on "Pakistan Elections 2024: Economic Reforms Agenda of Political Parties", hosted by Press Information Department here, he said, "Political parties should give a vision for the betterment of the country." The minister said emphatically that improvement of the economy and economics was the need of the hour.

Stressing the need to discuss the country's issues openly, he said that everyone should agree on the economic direction of the country. There was no ban on politics, but there should be no politics on the future of the country, Murtaza Solangi maintained. The minister opined that politics was the concentration of economy and economic interests. "Our main issues are education, health, gender equality," Murtaza Solangi remarked.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan, Mr. George Steiner, called on President Dr. Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## KPRA okays revised budget for FY 2022-23

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Policy Board of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA) has approved the revised budget of the Authority for fiscal year, 2022-23 and budget estimates for the fiscal year 2023-24. A target of Rs. 42 billion revenue collection has been set for the Authority for current financial year.

The approval was accorded in the 2nd meeting of the Policy Board, held here on Thursday with the caretaker Chief Minister Justice (R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah in the chair. Caretaker Provincial Minister for Finance Ahmed Rasool Bangash, Senior Member Board of Revenue Ikramullah Khan, Secretary Finance Amir Sultan Tareen, Secretary Excise and Taxation Syed Fayyaz Ali Shah, Director General KPRA Ubaidullah Kakakhel and Board members attended the meeting. Various agenda items were presented in the meeting for consideration and approval, some of which were approved on the occasion.

The forum deliberated upon proposals regarding increase in KPRA allowance as well as giving honoraria to KPRA employees on the basis of their performance, and directed the finance department to take a closer look at the proposals and come up with final recommendations for approval of the Board. Briefing about the implementation status of the decisions taken in the last meeting of the Policy Board, the participants were informed that all the decisions have been implemented. The chief minister on this occasion, urged upon KPRA authorities to show more zeal and work harder to increase the revenue of the province, and achievement cent percent target of the authority.

## Alvi accepts resignation of Justice Naqvi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday accepted the resignation of Supreme Court's Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi, a statement from his office said.

The development came a day after the judge, who was facing complaints of mis-conduct, tendered his resignation due to "circumstances which are a matter of public knowledge and to some extent public record". According to a press release issued by the President House today, Dr Alvi accepted Justice Naqvi's resignation "on the advice of the prime minister under Article 179 (retiring age) of the Constitution".

Hailing from Gujran-wala, Justice Naqvi was elevated to the Supreme Court on March 16, 2020. Justice Naqvi's resignation letter to the president, which was incorrectly dated January 10, 2023, had stated: "In the circumstances which are a matter of public knowledge and to some extent public record, it is no longer possible for me to continue to serve as a judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan."

Later, his personal secretary had issued a corrigendum, saying that the date may be corrected and recognised as Jan 10, 2024, and the quarters concerned may be informed accordingly.

## PPP to drag country out of prevailing crises

F.P. Report

FAISALABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing public rally in connection with the election campaign of the PPP in Tandlianwala, Faisalabad said that the party will form the federal government as well as the Punjab government.

Chairman Bilawal said that he is delighted to be among the jiyalas of the Party in Punjab. Some forces were under the impression that by martyring Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto they can eliminate the PPP and will be able to crush the poor and stop your way. "I want to give the message to them that we are not the ones who bow down and retreat", Chairman Bilawal said. We are the ones who are ready to contest against all the political forces and prove that the Bhutto of Punjab is still alive and we will snatch back our rights. We will save the people from the anti-poor, anti-grower and anti-people parties that have been imposed in Punjab.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that we are witnessing unprecedented poverty, inflation and unemployment today. When the Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto came to power, he became the prime minister of the poor, labourers, growers and youth. When Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto became the first ever woman prime minister of the Muslim Ummah, it was the credit of Faisalabad that she was the PM of the poor, growers, labourers and the people. We once again have to form a similar government in Lahore and Islamabad. Once again, a jiyala will be the chief minister and the prime minister.

Bilawal asked for the support of the people to form an Awami govern-



ment. "If you support us the way you had supported Shaheed Quaid-e-Awam and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, we will once again tackle poverty, inflation and unemployment", Chairman PPP said. Only the PPP can do it as rest of the parties are settling their personal vendettas and are contesting the elections to either avoid jail or to come out of the jail. We are contesting to save the people from poverty and unemployment. Other political parties do not have a manifesto. We have the manifesto of Shaheed Quaid-e-Awam and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto who gave us an ideology. We have a 10-point economic agenda for the people and if we come to power with your support then we will implement this agenda. Chairman Bilawal directed the workers to go to every door and tell the people about this agenda. He instructed them to deliver the Party's message. We will provide 300 units of electricity to poor people of the country free-of-cost. We will provide free education, and establish universities meeting international standards.

We will provide free and international standard health facility to every citizen like we have done in Sindh. People have to go abroad for treatment but that will not be the case when we come to power since we aim to provide free health facilities meeting international standards.

Bilawal urged the women workers to go to every doorstep and apprise the people of our plan to

extend the BISP and introduce other features along with it. The people need to know that we are following the footsteps of Shaheed Quaid-e-Awam who gave the 5-marla scheme and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto who gave 7-marla scheme, and resolving to provide three million houses to the poor people of Pakistan. The ownership of those houses will be given to the women of the households. We will also regularise temporary housing all over Punjab and give the residents ownership. During the recent catastrophic floods, we looked after our poor people and in Sindh we are constructing two million houses for the poor families. The ownership of those houses is being given to the women. If we can do this in Sindh then we can do in Punjab as well. Chairman Bilawal resolved. We will introduce the "Benazir Kissan Card" and financial help will be given directly to the poor growers instead of big factories. We will introduce the "Benazir Mazdoor Card" to provide the labourers their rights. This will be given to every labour whether working in factories or elsewhere.

Bilawal instructed the jiyalas to tell the youth that they must not waste their vote and this right of vote was given by the Quaid-e-Awam. Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto sacrificed her life for this right of vote and fought the dictators. If you want a government headed by a PM who is also from within the youth, and for your issues to be resolved, then the PPP is the sole option, Chairman PPP said.

## S Africa asks ICJ to order Israel to stop Gaza war

THE HAGUE: South Africa asked the World Court on Thursday to order Israel to immediately suspend its military operation in Gaza, where it says Israel is committing genocide against Palestinian civilians. The demand came at the closing of the first day of hearings of a case brought by South Africa against Israel at the UN's top court. Israel will respond to the allegations on Friday.

Israel faced accusations at the World Court on Thursday of genocide in its war in Gaza, as the first residents returned to northern areas where Israeli forces have begun withdrawing, leaving behind scenes of total devastation. Three months of Israeli bombardment has laid much of the narrow coastal enclave to waste, killing more than 23,000 people and driving nearly the entire population of 2.3 million Palestinians from their homes. An Israeli blockade has sharply restricted supplies of food, fuel and medicine, creating what the United Nations describes as a humanitarian catastrophe.

Israel says its only choice to defend itself is by eradicating Hamas, the Islamist group that rules Gaza, whose fighters sworn to Israel's destruction stormed through Israeli communities on Oct. 7, killing 1,200 people and capturing 240 hostages. Israel blames Hamas for all

harm to civilians for operating among them, which the fighters deny.

The case, brought by South Africa at the International Court of Justice in the Hague, accuses Israel of violating the 1948 genocide convention, enacted in the wake of the mass murder of Jews in the Holocaust, which mandates all countries to ensure such crimes are never repeated.

Israeli government spokesperson Eylon Levy compared the lawsuit to a centuries-old antisemitic conspiracy theory falsely accusing Jews of killing babies for rituals: "The State of Israel will appear before the International Court of Justice to dispel South Africa's absurd blood libel, as Pretoria gives political and legal cover to the Hamas rapist regime."

A lawyer representing South Africa's legal team has called the Gaza Strip "a concentration camp where genocide is taking place," John Dugard made the remarks while he was laying out a case in front of the International Court of Justice Thursday that South Africa has jurisdiction to take Israel to court over the genocide charge. He was repeating remarks made in 2023 by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The genocide charge strikes at the heart of Israel's national identity and such comparisons of

Israel's war in Gaza to Nazi concentration camps on a world stage are likely to stir emotions in Israel, which sees itself as a bulwark of security for Jews after 6 million were killed in the Holocaust. International support for Israel's creation in 1948 was deeply rooted in outrage over Nazi atrocities. South Africa wants the court to rule that Israel is committing genocide in its war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Israel denies the charges, saying it is fighting a war of self-defense following Hamas' deadly Oct. 7 attack.

A lawyer representing South Africa's legal team says Palestinians under Israeli bombardment have nowhere safe to go. In her address Thursday to the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Adila Hassim said Palestinians in Gaza "are killed in their homes in places where they seek shelter, in hospitals, in schools or in mosques, in churches." She said Palestinians have been killed if they did not follow Israeli orders to evacuate, but also if they evacuated to Israeli-designated safe corridors.

"The level of killing is so extensive that those whose bodies are found buried in mass graves often unidentified," Hassim said. South Africa is trying to prove to the court that Israel is committing genocide in its war against Hamas in Gaza. — Arab News

## IHC nullifies special court's in-camera proceedings

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In a legal victory for the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday set aside the orders of an in-camera trial of former party chairman Imran Khan and Vice-Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi in cipher case, declaring all proceedings after December 14, 2023, invalid.

A special court established under the Official Secrets Act 2023 on December 14 decided to hold in-camera proceedings of the high-profile case at Adiala jail while allowing the Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) plea, following the two politicians' indictment. However, Khan appealed his indictment, proceedings and gag order in the IHC, which later issued a stay on his in-camera trial in the cipher case till January 11, 2024, citing "legal errors" in the case.

Earlier today, as it reached its expiry, a single bench comprising Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb revoked the stay order and nullified all the special court's proceedings after December 14. The development came after the Attorney General for Pakistan assured the witnesses' statements would be recorded afresh.

AGP Usman Awan, who appeared before the court upon being summoned, told the court that 13 witnesses were ready to have their statements recorded again. Later, Justice Aurangzeb issued a five-page order, stating that the AGP apprised the court that the special court's December 14 order "is not in accord with the law".

The IHC, in its order, set aside the special court's order and declared all the proceedings after December 14 "to be of no legal consequence". It may be noted that two PTI leaders accused of an offence related to the alleged misuse of diplomatic cable for political purposes have been indicted twice in the case and pleaded not guilty in both instances. The trial was started afresh on December 14 following the framing of charges against Khan and Qureshi for the second time on December 13.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi addressing during a seminar.

## PHC hears contempt plea against ANP's Aimal Wali

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan observed that Contempt of Court proceedings should be disposed of when Awami National Party (ANP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President Aimal Wali admitted before media that he does not threatened judiciary as well as acceptance of harsh rhetoric, on Thursday.

It is worthy to mention that hundreds of ANP lawyers and activists were present in the Court-No:1, however, Chief Justice ordered evacuation of the court for the proceedings.

Chief Justice PHC Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan remarked that Aimal Wali rhetoric not only an attempt of his character assassination but also threatened the judiciary which isn't acceptable in civilized society. He added that it is neither his personal issue but it had created insecurity for judges and their families.

I will to forwarded the case to Anti-Terrorism Court if I wanted, because it has threatened judges but the Contempt of Court plea is submitted against a person whose family had granted great sacrifices for the nation, Chief Justice observed, Chief Justice remarked personally he doesn't mind it but ANP

president must have to explain his position in this regard.

The Chief Justice observed these remarks during Contempt of Court plea against ANP provincial president Aimal Wali for threatening and character assassination CJ PHC filed by Pakistan Tehreek Insaf leader Fazal Muhammad Khan while Barrister Sarwar Muzaffar Shah appeared before court on behalf of the petitioner.

Advocate General Amir Javed and Additional Advocate General Danyal Asad Chamkani were present for court's assistance while Barrister Emir Ullah Chamkani, Ahmad Farooq Khattak and Babar Khan Yousafzai advocates represented Aimal Wali before court.

Chief Justice observed that where is Aimal Wali? ANP president reached the Rostrum and argued that Aimal Wali is present on court's order while apologized for his harsh words as well as denied the threatening of judges or judiciary.

In the meantime, Chief Justice observed that as Pakhtun we can know how to react to the threats if Aimal Wali had given threats but his position [Judge/ Chief Justice] demands tolerance and patience. Chief Justice Ibrahim Khan remarked that

he has served in judiciary for 32 years and added that I will call Aimal Wali as son because his sons are in similar age period.

Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan ordered to play video clip in which Aimal Wali threatened judiciary and objected Chief Justice PHC. However, ANP's lawyers argued that the interview is speculated for political goals because the petitioner is opponent of Aimal Wali in upcoming general election and requested for provision of soft corner in this regard (acceptance of apology).

Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Amir Javed argued that respect of judiciary is obligation of every political party, however, Aimal Wali said that he is present before the court for dignity of the judiciary. ANP president argued that he can never think about contempt of court or threatening judiciary but had made an innocence complain in this regard. Aimal Wali added that he may used harsh word, however, Barrister Amir Ullah requested for court's mercy in this regard.

Chief Justice PHC Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan observed that COC would be dispose-off after acceptance of usage of harsh rhetoric before media and adjourned further hearing after arguments.